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LA FAYETTE

By BRAND WHITLOCK

LA FAYETTE
BIG MATT
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BELGIUM
FORTY YEARS OF IT

Photograph by Giraudon

MARIE JOSEPH PAUL YVES ROCH GILBERT DU MOTIER

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

AT THE AGE OF NINETEEN.

From a portrait in the possession of Madame de Corcelle at the Château of Beaufossé.

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LA FAYETTE

by

BRAND WHITLOCK

Volume I

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To
My Wife

PREFACE

In venturing to add another book to the list, already long, of works on La Fayette, I ought, perhaps, to prefix it with a word of explanation. In 1917 I was asked to speak at the ceremonies held on the Fourth of July at La Fayette's tomb in Picpus Cemetery. It was the moment of our entry into the World War, and all the implications of the time and place combined to awaken in me an interest that survived the occasion. I began to read everything about La Fayette that I could find, and the more I read, the more I came to like him; something of the peculiar charm he must have radiated in life still glowed from the dullest page. In time I had collected pretty much everything that had been published, and at last, about four years ago, I began to write the book that, after such an interest so long sustained, was of course inevitable in the case of one with whom writing was an old and incorrigible habit.

The life of La Fayette was the history of his times, an inseparable part of the vast revolutionary cycle with which it was conterminous in its long span. He was not yet twenty when he engaged in his first revolution, and he was seventy-three when he undertook his last. In his youth he saw old Louis XV playing at cards with Madame DuBarry in the *salons* of Versailles; he was presented to George III at St. James's Palace and fought by the side of Washington from Brandywine to Yorktown. And then after being tossed about by the whirlwind of the French Revolution, spending long years in prison and exile, defying Napoleon under the

Consulate and the Empire and combating the Bourbons under the Restoration, he lived long enough to see triumphant democracy trampling on the damask-covered chairs of the White House at Andrew Jackson's inaugural levee, and to escort Louis Philippe across the street from the Palais Royal to the Tuileries.

He has his American legend and he has his French legend, but they are curiously unlike. He has never been the hero to the French that he is to Americans; the great adventure of his youth was the pure flame of romance; his devotion to liberty, at first instinctive and sentimental, happened at that initial period of our history to coincide with the interests of the colonies in revolt. But it was otherwise when he got back to France and began to apply his generous principles to the conditions of an older civilization, and in the *salons* of that time as of this, he was regarded as a demagogue and a visionary. His life was so long and so tumultuous that the task of writing it in full seems to have been considered impractical; any one of its sharply defined periods was good for two volumes at least, and thus it happened that most of the books written about him have dealt with separate and distinct phases rather than with his life as a whole. Moreover, many of these books were coloured, as was perhaps inevitable, by the political prejudices of their authors or by the passions of their times, so that, what with lapidation on the one hand and hagiolatry on the other, the authentic and very human La Fayette had become well-nigh unrecognizable.

The picturesque contradiction between his political performance and the traditions of his caste, of course, largely accounts for these conflicting estimates of his character and of his stormy career. An aristocrat to the finger tips, he supported the popular cause, and a marquis of the *Ancien*

Régime he did so much to overthrow, he retained its elegance and manner down into the age of *bourgeois* and democratic vulgarity he helped to usher in. Nevertheless the striking thing about his life is its unbroken unity and symmetry. With the physiocrats—Quesnay, Condorcet, Malesherbes and Du Pont de Nemours—he was one of the founders of modern Liberalism and for a long time its leader in the world. Liberty was his religion and the passion of his life. It was a life full of danger and constantly beset with all sorts of snares, pitfalls and ambuscades. He had, too, what Jefferson called "a canine appetite for popularity," or, as Lamartine more elegantly described it, "an instinct for renown," but his ambition, however vast, was noble and disinterested, and he never yielded once to the peculiar temptations that most ambitious men find it impossible to resist. It cost him his fortune and his freedom, but with an idealism that was counted foolish and naïve, he tenaciously adhered throughout his whole life to his liberal principles.

What I have sought to do is to draw a portrait of the man himself, and in making this attempt I have tried to look through his eyes at the men he knew and the events with which it was his fate to be associated. I have tried to picture them as they appeared to him—the only aspect in which they could be a part of his conscious life—and not necessarily as they may appear in the light of subsequent history or to later generations that esteem themselves, and for aught I know, may be, superior in wisdom to his. I have not made up any conversations or rearranged any events with an eye to dramatic effect. The facts of any life, if one can get at them, are always more interesting than anything the imagination can invent, though the imagination must aid biography to achieve, if it can, that synthesis

which is the aim of any art. Such a synthesis, in the biography of La Fayette, would reveal a consistency of principle and a continuity of purpose that endured unbroken down to the day when, with all his principles and his illusions unimpaired, he found rest at last in American soil brought over in the *Brandywine* to make a grave for him in Picpus.

BRAND WHITLOCK

Cannes

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We shall look upon you always as belonging to us, during the whole of our life, and as belonging to our children after us. You are ours by that more than patriotic self-devotion with which you flew to the aid of our fathers at the crisis of our fate; ours by that unshaken gratitude for your services which is a precious portion of our inheritance; ours by that tie of love, stronger than death, which has linked your name for the endless ages of time with the name of Washington.

President John Quincy Adams in bidding farewell to La Fayette at Washington City, September 7, 1825.

CHAPTER I

L'ANCIEN RÉGIME

1757-1777 *Aet.: 1-19*

CHAPTER I

L'ANCIEN RÉGIME

I

THE winter of 1765 and 1766 was the severest they had known in Auvergne for thirty years. From the windy terrace of the *château* of Chavaniac, perched high on an escarpment of the Velay hills, Gilbert looked out on the bleak panorama of a snow-bound world. Above the *château* the dark pine woods set their cold, blue masses; across the plain of Chaliergues and the valley of the frozen Allier, he could see the bald summits of the Margaride and the volcanic Plomb du Cantal, and when the brumous haze lifted, there, away to the north, was the Puy de Dôme, rounding grey and mysterious on the rim of that vast horizon. The *château,* an enormous blockhouse built in the massive style of the fourteenth century, was as gaunt and austere as the scene it dominated. Its bald façade was flanked by two towers, like pigeonries, and its crenellated donjon could be seen for leagues around. Behind it, close to its heavy walls, huddled the squalid little village of Chavaniac, almost buried under the snow. There was a great deal of suffering in the village that winter, and as they sat before the great fire in the *salon,* Gilbert's grandmother and aunts, always in black, mourning for that long line of La Fayettes who were dead and gone, worked no more at their tapestry frames, but sewed for the poor.

And then, to make matters worse, a monstrous wild beast came out of the forest of Gévaudan, and began to terrify the whole countryside. No one knew what it was; it was too large for a wolf; some said it was a hyena, escaped from a menagerie that had given an exhibition at St. Georges d'Aurac that autumn. At night the peasants could hear it howling in the wood, and the sound froze their blood with horror. The beast grew bolder, began to carry off pigs and sheep. The next thing it would be carrying off children. The three old ladies and the Abbé Fayon, Gilbert's tutor, talked of nothing else; they wondered what it could be, advanced hypotheses, gave it up with a final but somehow inconclusive *"enfin!"* and in a vicious circle resumed their fruitless speculations. Gilbert listened, talked of it in whispers with his little cousin, Mademoiselle de Chavaniac, and discussed it with the Abbé Fayon when they went for their promenade; the peasants would stop and after a bow and a scrape to the young lord of the manor, give their opinions, and the latest news of the wild beast.

As Gilbert walked back to the *château* beside the Abbé he fell silent. He walked erectly, in his stout buckled shoes and thick woollen stockings, the skirts of his coat with the great flaps at the pockets balancing with his stride, the three-cornered hat on his reddish hair giving him a sedate air for one who was only eight years old. An expression of determination had settled on his freckled face, he had made a resolution; he would go forth and slay this monstrous wild beast in single combat; it was his duty as a nobleman, lord of the manor of Chavaniac—and a La Fayette. He was the Marquis now, the last of his line; it all depended on him.

His grandmother and his aunts were in the small *salon,* ensconced in great *bergères* before the fire, sewing by candle-

Photograph by Giraudon

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

AT THE AGE OF SEVEN, WITH HIS MOTHER AND THE LITTLE COUSIN WHO LIVED AT CHAVANIAC.

From a portrait in the possession of M. François de Corcelle, a great-grandson of La Fayette.

light and still talking about the ferocious beast. Letters had come; the news of it was spreading over France; it was the talk of the *salons* of Paris, eclipsing, for the moment, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Every one at Paris wondered what it could be. The ladies speculated, and charged the dear Abbé to be cautious in choosing the daily promenades of the Marquis. But the Abbé would not allow himself to be excited by tales of this fabulous monster. Like all those people in the *salons* at Paris, the Abbé was tinctured with the scepticism of the eighteenth century, and had a secret leaning towards Voltaire, just then banished with his sarcastic rictus to Ferney.

When the Marquis announced his decision to go forth and slay the beast, the ladies raised their hands. *"Mon Dieu!"* they must have cried, all three together. It was unheard of! But the lad looked at his grandmother and his two aunts calmly out of his hazel eyes. He had made his resolve, and though a good boy, with a peculiarly winning smile, he could scowl and be terribly stubborn at times.

He had been born in the *château* of Chavaniac on September 6, 1757, and the following day, as the entry in the parish register of the little Church of Saint-Roch in the village certified, "the very high and very mighty lord Monseigneur Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier de La Fayette, legitimate son of the very high and very mighty lord Monseigneur Michel Louis Christophe Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette, Baron de Vissac, lord of Saint Romain and other places and of the very high and very mighty lady Madame Marie Louise Julie de la Rivière, was baptized."

His mother spent little time at Chavaniac; she lived at Paris with her father, the Marquis de La Rivière, and her

maternal grandfather, the Count de La Rivière; her father had married his cousin, the Count's daughter. Madame de La Fayette came to Chavaniac every summer for a month or two, after the season, when all the nobles went to their *châteaux*. She was a beautiful woman, witty and clever, who felt it to be her duty to remain at Court, and advance the interests of her son. It was the only way to get on. Besides, it was rather dull at Chavaniac, with no one but three provincial old ladies to talk to.

Gilbert could not remember his father, Colonel of Grenadiers and Knight of Saint Louis; he had been killed by an English cannon ball at the battle of Minden on August 1, 1759, at the age of twenty-five; it was a proverb in Auvergne that the La Fayettes all died young and in battle. Gilbert's grandmother and his aunts could trace the family line back to the year 1000, but they could go no farther, which was a pity. The family name was Motier, and the place name originally Villa Faya, long since corrupted into La Fayette. Theirs was the cadet branch, that of Roch Motier de Champtières. The elder branch was that of the first Gilbert Motier de La Fayette. The two branches descended from Pons Motier de La Fayette, who had married Alex Brun de Champtières, and fought before Saint-Jean-d'Acre in 1250. They were all mighty men-at-arms. Jean Motier de La Fayette fell at the battle of Poitiers in 1356; Gilbert III was the celebrated Marshal of France who fought with Jeanne d'Arc and helped to place Charles VII on his throne; Charles Motier de La Fayette was knighted for bravery at the siege of Rouen in 1449; Gilbert IV was equerry to Louis XI and afterwards to Charles VIII; Antoine de La Fayette was grand master of artillery; Louis de La Fayette, Governor of Boulogne, commanded the siege of Thérouënne; René Armand was a general of infantry in 1693; and so on.

Jean Motier de Champtières of the cadet branch was Seneschal of Auvergne in 1604. His grandson, Claude, Chevalier de Vissac, had sixty-five sieges and battles to his credit; Jean Marie, Baron de Vissac, in 1664, distinguished himself in the expedition to Barbary and lived to fight twenty years longer. Gilbert's grandfather, Edouard du Motier, was wounded at Philippsburg, at Mons and at Spire; then, too gloriously crippled to fight longer, he married Catherine de Chavaniac in 1708 and by her came into possession of the *château* of Chavaniac and assumed its name. The marquisate of La Fayette, through a failure of issue male in the elder branch, passed to his eldest son Jacques Roch du Motier, who was captain of dragoons at eighteen. In the wars in Italy, at the head of his troop, he charged the Austrians and took some prisoners, among them a captain whom he mounted behind his saddle, allowing him to retain his pistols. In return for this chivalry the captain shot him in the back. By the death of Jacques Roch du Motier the title passed to his younger brother, Gilbert's father. The women of the La Fayette family were hardly less renowned; the beautiful Louise Motier de La Fayette was celebrated for having successfully resisted the amorous advances of Louis XIII and of Cardinal Richelieu, and Madame de La Fayette was the famous novelist, author of *Zaïde* and *La Princesse de Clèves*. The La Rivières, Gilbert's maternal ancestors, were nobles of Brittany and had distinguished themselves on the battle field as well.

Gilbert's grandmother and aunts grounded him religiously in all this recondite genealogical lore; reared him piously in this cult of family, this ancestor worship; he knew all the La Fayettes and their martial histories, and often stood gazing at the dark, shiny portraits of them on the walls of the cold and gloomy *salons* of Chavaniac. He liked to

think that he was a Gaul and not a Frank because he "loved better Vercingetorix defending our mountains, than Clovis and his successors." His head was full of war and glory, and he longed to have a uniform and a sword. After all, if he would go out and fight with ferocious monsters, the old ladies had only themselves to blame; they had brought him up that way. The Abbé Fayon taught him Latin, *Arma virumque;* but he did not teach him much religion, for religion had gone almost wholly out of fashion in France. He never knew much discipline, and did as he pleased; in short, was a spoiled child.

During the rest of that winter, while the wild beast continued to range the countryside, the ladies were in constant anxiety, for the Marquis was reckless and had no fear of anything. He pushed his walks as deep into the forest as the Abbé Fayon would allow him. But the young knight did not slay the dragon. A newspaper in the neighbourhood asserted that a man had intended to kill it, but failed to do so because he was afraid. Gilbert wrote an indignant letter to the editor protesting that it was not he who had been afraid. Grandmamma Chavaniac read the letter and calmly put it in the fire. She was a lady of great good sense; people came to consult her judgment from twenty leagues around. But after a while some one slew the beast, or slew a beast, and sent the carcass to Paris as a gift to the King. Horace Walpole saw it in the Queen's antechamber at Versailles. It was "just arrived and covered with a cloth, which two chasseurs lifted up. It was an absolute wolf, but uncommonly large, and the expression of agony and fierceness remained strongly imprinted on its dead jaws."

Probably there were many wolves driven by the rigorous winter out of the mountains down into Auvergne that year, and this one summed up in itself and symbolized

them all. At any rate, it was done for, took its place in the history of France as the "Beast of the Gévaudan," and Jean Jacques Rousseau could resume his posturing in the frigid *salons* of Paris without a rival.

II

Though the La Fayettes were allied to the greatest families in *Le Livre d'Or de la Noblesse Française*—the Polignacs, the Bourbon-Bussets, the Marillacs, the Bouillés, the Montboissiers, the Lusignem-Lezays, the La Trémoïlles —and had the influence due their rank, they were poor. Gilbert's father had left no fortune. The ladies knew nothing of agriculture and the reddish volcanic earth of the farms about Chavaniac yielded scant riches in any event. Thus they lived an austere and frugal life. Gilbert's only resources were a pension of seven hundred and eighty *livres*[1] a year, granted to him by the King on his grandmother's appeal. He continued to live on at Chavaniac with his grandmother and his aunts, under the tutelage of the Abbé Fayon, for two years after that winter, with nothing to break the monotony of life in the country except a visit now and then to his two great-aunts Marie and Gabrielle du Motier de Champtières, nuns in the convent of Chazes. But in 1768, when he was eleven years old, his mother came to Chavaniac and took him to Paris.

He was loath to go. The thought of leaving his grandmother, his aunts and the little cousin whom he adored as a sister, made him sad. He had no curiosity to see Paris. What impressed him most, and most unfavourably, when

[1] The monetary unit known as the *livre* was equivalent to 1 franc 80 under Louis XIV and 1 franc 44 under Louis XVI. At the rate of exchange fixed by the American Commissioners at Paris in 1778 a dollar equalled 5 *livres* 8 *sols*.

he got there, was the fact that in all those noisy, crowded streets not a single person took off his hat to him, as everybody did at Chavaniac.

He lived with his mother, his grandfather and his great-grandfather, in an apartment at the Luxembourg. He liked his great-grandfather, the Count de La Rivière; he was a handsome old gentleman with a charming face, who had just resigned a command in the Black Musketeers, and went much into society. He did not like his grandfather, the Marquis de La Rivière, quite so well. He was a crusty old fellow from Brittany, very learned, very rich and very parsimonious; Gilbert understood that he was a miser. However, he had this in his favour: he had been mixed up in a conspiracy of the noblemen of Brittany against the Regent, and to save his head he had been obliged to flee to Spain. It was this circumstance that had prevented him from taking military service and getting himself properly killed in battle, as a nobleman should.

Gilbert was entered at the College of Plessis in the rue Saint-Jacques and went into residence there with the Abbé Fayon and another preceptor in the person of M. Frestel. He did very well in his studies, especially in Latin, and excelled in rhetoric. Once he was told to write a composition describing the perfect horse, which the mere sight of the rider's whip sufficed to render obedient. He wrote the composition, but described the perfect horse as one which, at sight of the whip, promptly threw his rider. M. Binet, professor of rhetoric, but notwithstanding this a man with a sense of humour, was highly amused, and awarded Gilbert the prize. He soon became a leader among his fellows. When he appeared in the court they gathered about him at once, a lively, chattering, adoring crowd of youngsters, smart in embroidered coats, with small swords at their sides,

Photograph by Giraudon

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

FROM A PORTRAIT BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST.

In the possession of M. Xavier de Pusy.

their hair pomaded and powdered and worn in a queue. One day he organized a manifestation in protest against the punishment of a comrade; but like so many leaders of generous causes he was not supported as he thought he should have been. He expected to be punished, and was determined to draw his sword and defend himself. However, this did not prove to be necessary; the masters ignored the revolt, and it hung fire and fizzled out.

His mother died on April 3, 1770, and a few weeks later his grandfather, whom every one had thought so hard, died of grief at the loss of his daughter, leaving his fortune to Gilbert, who found himself thus suddenly, at the age of thirteen, with one hundred and twenty thousand *livres* a year in his own right.

There was, of course, for him only one profession, that of arms. The old Count de La Rivière confided his military education to a retired officer, M. de Margelay, and a year later obtained for him a place as cadet in his own old regiment, the Black Musketeers, detailed as bodyguard to the King. Gilbert continued on at the College of Plessis, but on the days of great reviews he was allowed to turn out with his regiment. He was tall for his years, and rather awkward, self-conscious and embarrassed, but all this could be conveniently hidden under a cold exterior. And at last he had a uniform, a uniform of scarlet and gold, with jack-boots and a cocked hat, and, floating from his shoulders, a great mantle of blue, embroidered with a cross of silver encircled by flames. He wore *galons* to mark his rank of gentleman-cadet, not only a distinction but a protection as well, for an angry officer, laying about him with the flat of his sword, would see to it that none of the blows he rained on the backs of common soldiers should touch a

young gentleman who before long would be an officer himself.

It was thrilling as the regiment trotted along, sabres rattling, bits jangling, the black horses blowing through their soft nostrils. The great day of his life was that on which, after the King had passed the Black Musketeers in review at Versailles, he was detailed to ride up to the King and, according to the ritual, ask if His Majesty would deign to give any further orders to the regiment. He rode up, his heart in his mouth, reined in his black horse, and with his sword saluted old Louis XV, actually there before him—and stammered the formal question. The King, of course, replied no, as he replied to that same question three hundred and sixty-five days in the year; the Marquis saluted, backed his horse the proper distance, or nearly the proper distance, and breathlessly rode back to report to his commander. He found the experience—after it was all over—charming.

At the age of fourteen he was sent to the Military Academy at Versailles. He had grown taller, and had not entirely overcome his shy embarrassment, but M. de Margelay was forming him. He was learning to ride in the Royal Manège with the young Count d'Artois, grandson of Louis XV, and exactly his own age. He could not ride quite so well as the Count d'Artois, but since he had a hundred and twenty thousand *livres* a year to spend as he pleased, and kept a stable of horses which he lent to all his friends, he was popular. And he kept his eyes open and knew what was going on in that high exclusive world; writing to his cousin, Mademoiselle de Chavaniac, he gave her the news of the town, offered to describe for her "compass in hand the latest style of bonnet" and told her of the proposed marriage of one of their cousins to Mademoiselle de Ron-

cherolles, who had "a place as lady in waiting to Madame de Bourbon, at one thousand *écus* a year, besides an income of five thousand *livres*." Gilbert's uncle—*à la mode de Bretagne*—

would consent on condition that the Prince de Condé promise their cousin command of a regiment of cavalry, which Madame de Montboissier thought too high a price, and said to M. le Marquis de Canillac that, really, if he was going to be so difficult, her husband would take no further interest in the affair; this irritated the Marquis de Canillac and they had had sharp words. The nephew does not care much about this marriage; he said that there were much better matches in his part of the country; he named them, and said that they would not refuse him. I thought that I had told you that the Cardinal de La Roche-Aimon was Abbé of Saint-Germain; one hears that M. de Briges has the Barony de Mercœur; that M. de Vauguyon has died, regretted neither by the Court nor the city. Last Thursday's ball has been postponed to the 15th, that is, a week hence. I dined, the day before yesterday, Thursday, at the house of M. de La Tour d'Auvergne, who is exchanging compliments with M. de Turenne, to-day the Duke de Bouillon; he told us that he should lose perhaps a million by his handsome behaviour. You will easily recognize the man.

Gilbert was now fourteen and a half, and the Count de La Rivière thought it time for him to be getting married. Accordingly he opened negotiations with the Duke d'Ayen, eldest son of the old Marshal Duke de Noailles, head of the greatest family in France.

The Duke d'Ayen, as colonel of the Noailles regiment of dragoons, had made the last four campaigns of the Seven Years' War, come out a lieutenant-general and was now inspector of the government of Flanders, and Governor of Roussillon. He cut a gay figure in society, was brilliant, witty and original in conversation, interested in science,

music, literature, agriculture, war and philosophy, member of the Academy of Sciences and, of course, an atheist; in short, a typical representative of the eighteenth century. He had five daughters, Louise, Mademoiselle de Noailles; Adrienne, Mademoiselle d'Ayen; Clotilde, Mademoiselle d'Epernon; Pauline, Mademoiselle de Maintenon; and Rosalie, Mademoiselle de Montclar.

As a foreseeing man he was on the look-out for husbands for them; it was already settled that Louise was to wed her cousin the Viscount de Noailles, second son of the Marshal Duke de Mouchy, and d'Ayen was ready to give Adrienne to the Marquis de La Fayette. The Duchess d'Ayen, however, looked on life through other eyes than those of the worldly minded Duke; she was an Aguesseau, granddaughter of the old Chancellor, and had been reared in the austere, puritanical and narrow piety of the Jansenists. She would not even entrust the education of her daughters to others but taught them herself. First, the shorter catechisms of Fleury, then the longer catechisms by the same author; after that the Gospels, then the Old Testament as abridged by Mesenguy, the *Magasin des Enfants,* the elements of geography and *Rollin's Ancient History.* She instructed them in the art of conversation, read out to them the best of French poetry, Corneille, Racine and Voltaire, and even before they could write taught them to dictate letters in the elegant style of the eighteenth century.

The little girls dined with their mother every afternoon at three o'clock, and afterwards attended her in her boudoir, an apartment hung in cramoisy and gold; the Duchess would seat herself in a large *bergère* before the fireplace, and on a low table by her side arrange her snuff-box, her needles and her books. The five little girls would group

themselves about her, on chairs and stools, according to age, with polite little manœuvres to determine which should be nearest the mother. Then they discussed their lessons, the books lying on the small table and afterwards, the events of the day, learning to speak with ease, grace and distinction, in low cultured voices, in precise French, after the manner of *grandes dames* in the salons of the faubourg Saint-Germain. Such were the odd principles on which the five daughters of the Duchess d'Ayen were educated and reared.

Adrienne, very early in life, began to be troubled by religious doubts, which was not so strange, after all, considering that she lived in a world where free-thinking was the fashion. She was then being prepared for her first communion, but as she refused to receive it until her doubts could be allayed, her mother thought it wisest to postpone this sacrament until Adrienne should be more calm and settled in her views.

It was at this juncture that the old Count de La Rivière, having arranged the preliminaries with the Duke d'Ayen, proposed Gilbert for the hand of Adrienne. The Duke was eager for the match, but the Duchess opposed it, and being an Aguesseau there was no way to move her. Not that there was any personal objection to young La Fayette; but Adrienne was only twelve, and the Marquis only fourteen, a mere boy. The Duke argued that it would be a brilliant match; the Marquis was of an old, distinguished and noble family and had a great fortune; no matter; the fact that the Marquis was alone in the world, with a fortune to spend as he pleased, and no mentor to guide him, was but one reason the more for not accepting him. The Duke stormed out of the house in a rage, vowing not to return until she consented; he left home, went into residence else-

where and in fact separated from his wife. The Duchess held out for a whole year, and the Duke and the Count were at their wits' end. But a woman came to the rescue. Gilbert was living with his great-grandfather at the Luxembourg, very much coddled by a great-aunt, the Countess de Lusignem. This lady had a better technique in the art of match-making than the two noblemen, and she arranged a compromise, to the relief of everybody. The wedding was not to be solemnized until the Marquis's education was finished, and Adrienne was not to leave home during the first year of her married life. On these terms the Duchess consented; the Duke was reconciled to his wife and returned home, though this made little change in his habits.

Gilbert had gone to Chavaniac for his holiday, and while there, a letter came from Paris informing him that his great-grandfather had arranged his marriage with the second daughter of the Duke d'Ayen. When he went back to Paris, the old Count brought about a meeting between him and his future wife at the *hôtel* de Noailles, No. 451 rue Saint-Honoré. It was a stately mansion, with a court before and a garden behind, and one of the sights of Paris. The garden, with its statues by Falconet, extended to the grill of the Tuileries, and the great *salons* were filled with mirrors and tapestries, furniture by Boule, consoles of porphyry, lustres in rock crystal, vases from China and Japan, clocks by Ferdinand Berthoud, paintings by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Correggio, Paul Veronese, Van Dyck, Rubens, Rembrandt and Murillo, and decorations by the moderns Watteau, Boucher and Fragonard.

In one of these *salons* Gilbert bowed, and Mademoiselle d'Ayen dropped a curtsy; he bent over and kissed her hand, as in one of the paintings by Watteau on the wall. She

Photograph by Giraudon

THE MARQUISE DE LA FAYETTE

FROM A MINIATURE AT THE TIME OF HER MARRIAGE.

In the possession of the Count de Remusat.

was small and slender and delicate; not especially beautiful, but with what eyes! Gilbert thought her very nice.

They were married in the private chapel of the *hôtel* de Noailles on Monday, April 11, 1774, by the Vicar-General of the Archbishopric of Paris, Abbé Paul de Murat, a cousin of Gilbert. His witnesses were his great-uncle, Maréchal de Camp Count de Lusignem, and his cousin, the Marquis de Bouillé, brigadier-general in the King's armies. Adrienne's witnesses were her uncle, Lieutenant-General Duke de Mouchy and her uncle, Maréchal de Camp Count de Tessé. Gilbert's great-grandfather, the Lieutenant-General Count de La Rivière, appeared in the marriage settlement in his quality of guardian, and on April 30, he and the Count de Lusignem had the honour to announce the marriage. Adrienne had a *dot* of two hundred thousand *livres*. Gilbert was sixteen years and six months, and Adrienne fourteen years and five months old at the time of their marriage.

III

Old Louis XV, the Well Beloved, died of small-pox in May of that year, and the feelings of the whole nation burst forth in joy. The people thought that hard times were over at last. Louis XVI came to the throne, and at Versailles there was the pleasant excitement of change, the stimulating hope of places under the new reign. The Duke d'Ayen obtained at once the post of commander of the King's bodyguard, and indefatigable in the family interest, secured for Gilbert a commission as captain in the Noailles dragoons, with the understanding that he was to remain at home and not assume command of his troop until he was eighteen years old. Gilbert, however, was not content to remain at home and, to the distress of his young wife,

joined his regiment that summer at Metz, where it was in garrison, under the command of Adrienne's cousin, Colonel the Prince de Poix, a vain, magnificent lordling, son of the Marshal de Mouchy, and not so popular as his dashing elder brother Louis, Viscount de Noailles, who had married Louise.

One fear, however, clouded all this joy, the fear of catching the small-pox. If it could carry off kings, who was safe? And so inoculation became the fashion. In September the Marquis came back from Metz and took a house at Chaillot for the operation. Adrienne and the Duchess d'Ayen determined to accompany him, and, all three shut up together, the Duchess nursed him through the ordeal with the devotion of a mother. The Duke d'Ayen opened his house at Versailles that autumn, in order to be near the Court, and while the Duchess did not care for the gay and worldly life there, she presented her two new sons-in-law, the Viscount and the Marquis with their young wives at Court that winter. She gave dinners, and once a week went with them to the Queen's ball, and afterwards received at supper—all this to keep the Duke in good humour.

The life that swirled giddily about the palace at Versailles was luxurious and profligate; try as he would, M. Turgot could not keep down expenses; masked balls, banquets, theatres—it all went on, with the blond young Queen Marie Antoinette as its shining centre. At a *bal paré,* Horace Walpole sat with the ambassadors, just behind the royal family, and watched the minuets; but "it was impossible to see anything but the Queen! Hebes and Flores, Helens and Graces, are street-walkers to her. She is a statue of beauty when standing or sitting; grace itself when she moves. She was dressed in silver, scattered over with laurier-

roses; few diamonds, and feathers, much lower than the Monument. They say she does not dance in time, but then it is wrong to dance in time."

The Marquis, like his two closest friends, Noailles and the young Count Philippe de Ségur, was one of the beaux in the fast set that gathered about the Queen, with free access to her presence and to the apartments of the Princes, the Count de Provence—Monsieur now—and the Count d'Artois. When they were not at Versailles, they were at Les Porcherons, an ancient hamlet in the fields northwest of Paris. Les Porcherons was renowned for its *cabarets* and had long been a popular resort, frequented on Sundays by common soldiers, *grisettes* and fishwives, but now it became the thing for smart people to go there. The Queen's set took over the Epée de Bois, one of the most famous of the *cabarets,* and soon took over its name as well, becoming known as the Société de l'Epée de Bois. They were the smartest and the fastest and, in their own estimation, the most important set in Paris, the exponents of the modern idea, contemptuous of the older world, which they found slow, stodgy and ridiculous. So sure were they of their ascendancy and power that they engaged in a conflict with the older courtiers over the fashions; they condemned as unbecoming the costumes that had been worn at the Court of Louis XV; perukes and high head-dresses must go, powdered hair and queues were sufficient. The Count de Provence and the Count d'Artois led the revolt, and the Marquis, ready then as ever to take up the cause of progress, was glad to join them. The revolt at first prospered brilliantly, gave them importance and shocked and offended the elderly and staid. The fashions were set at the Sign of the Wooden Sword. There they practised the dances that they were to execute before Marie Antoinette. But one

night, dancing in a minuet at the Trianon, the Marquis made a false step, and the Queen laughed at him. It cut him deeply and he never forgot it.

He feared that he did not precisely shine at Court. He was serious and silent, with a grave and cold exterior, more English than French; the conversation that flowed on forever about him, the brilliant loquacity and light laughter, bored him, and he showed it. His manner was stately enough for grand occasions but it was not frivolous or flattering enough for the young Queen and, excessively sensitive, he was conscious of a certain inimical feeling. Ségur said that the Marquis's cold exterior "which so falsely suggested embarrassment and timidity, concealed the most active spirit, the firmest character and the most ardent soul." Ségur should have known, for in the course of a rivalry over a girl, and in spite of their friendship, the Marquis spent the whole of one night sitting on Ségur's bed trying to induce him to fight a duel. Though the gilded youth of their set were always fighting duels in the leafy shades of the Champs Élysées or in pale dawns in the Bois de Boulogne, Ségur refused; the girl was hardly worth a duel, and he was fond of La Fayette.

It took Noailles to do that sort of thing. Noailles excelled in all the manly accomplishments; when the Duke d'Orléans, back from prodigious dissipations in London, affected by the Anglomania from which most persons suffer at some period of their lives, introduced English customs at Monceau, among others, the habit of heavy drinking, no one did it better or carried it off with a more convincing air than the young Viscount de Noailles. He could hold his own with the English lords who visited Paris, and even drink them under the table. The Duke d'Ayen was proud of his son-in-law, and sighed to Ségur:

"Why can't you infuse more spirit into La Fayette?"

The Marquis did the best he could—he was only seventeen—and one day at dinner, if he did not get as drunk as a lord, he did drink a great deal more than was good for him, acquitted himself so well, in fact, that his friends had to take him home in a carriage. On the way he kept saying:

"Don't forget to tell Noailles how much I drank."

The Duke was encouraged.

As a matter of fact the Marquis was not made for fashionable dissipations. Behind that grave face, under that powdered reddish hair with its ribbon and queue, as he moved through the stately measures of a minuet in the *salons* of the Trianon, or watched Marie Antoinette gamble at *loto* until dawn, judgments were forming that may at times have revealed themselves in the calm hazel eyes, and implied a criticism on the extravagance of the young Queen who was spending six millions a year on her table alone. Without regret for the past, or concern for the future, as Ségur said afterwards, they were marching gaily on a carpet of flowers that hid an abyss. There were twenty-five hundred servants in the red brick pile of the Palace at Versailles. M. Turgot was squirming like a devil in holy water trying to make both ends meet. And Louis XVI had not been on the throne a year!

Voltaire was still exiled at Ferney; Rousseau had gone with David Hume to visit London, and spread among the English his doctrine of the automatic perfection of mankind, but the philosophers and the encyclopædists and the physiocrats kept on sapping and mining the *ancien régime*. The disintegrating process had been going on steadily in the *salons* of Paris for ten years. The old order was being talked to death. Anything for an epigram.

"Voltaire!" sneered a lady at a dinner. "But he is a bigot! He believes in a God!"

But what was a smart affectation in the *salons* was a grim reality with the lower orders, and it was becoming a reality, too, not quite so grim, in the mind of the Marquis. Marie Antoinette might laugh at him—but he knew, or was beginning to know. Tales of misery were coming from all parts of France—peasants so poor and so hungry that they were drying their wheat in ovens while it was still green in order to eat it, and cutting down their fruit-trees to make fires; in his own Auvergne some had actually died of starvation. He was beginning to think of political questions. Indeed, it was impossible that in France at that period, or at any other, for that matter, people should not talk politics, and the Society of the Wooden Sword was no exception. Old Louis XV had bequeathed to his grandson the long quarrel with the provincial *parlements* that had so seriously interfered with his pleasures during the latter years of his life, and it had broken out more virulently than ever. And the Society of the Wooden Sword gave a burlesque of those grave judicial bodies. The Count d'Artois played the part of the President, and La Fayette took the rôle of the Procureur-General. The show was a great success, the elder courtiers were shocked; they did not like to see youth make fun of age, and turn the judges of the land into laughing-stocks. And the immemorial quarrel between the generations, the old and the young, already begun in the dispute about fashions in clothes, broke out afresh over fashions in institutions. Old Maupeou ventured to hint to the King that it was bad policy for his brothers to frequent the society of young bloods like Noailles, La Fayette and the rest, and above all to travesty the courts. But the King said:

"We shall think of that later on. For the present there is nothing to do about it, for I am almost one of the number myself."

So passed the first year of La Fayette's married life. The Duke d'Ayen, in his tireless efforts to obtain places for his relatives, was trying to induce the Count de Provence to appoint La Fayette to an honorary post in his household. La Fayette had no intention of becoming gentleman-in-waiting to the King's brother or anybody else, but, not daring openly to oppose his father-in-law, he resorted to diplomacy. The next time he was in the presence of Monsieur, he took occasion to say something that, while not offensive, was not in accordance with His Royal Highness's opinions. The Duke d'Ayen could only shake his head and say to La Fayette:

"You ruined your own prospects by that remark."

The Marquise liked the life at Court no better than he; she was wrapped up in her husband, whom she adored, and was growing more and more thoughtful. She had succeeded at last in dissipating her religious doubts, and on the First Sunday after Easter, in 1775, she made her first communion.

IV

La Fayette, in the summer of 1775, was glad enough to join his regiment at Metz, even if it was merely a stupid little garrison town where every other person spoke German. Ségur was more enterprising; he got leave and went over to Spa. The little Belgian town, tucked away in the Ardennes, was the first watering-place in Europe, and the resort of smart society, for, as it was situated in the Principality of Liège, and as the principality was governed by bishops, the greatest licence was allowed and there was a

complete absence of moral restraint. Everybody who was anybody went there to take the cure, to drink the waters of the Pouhon, to gamble, to watch the races and be cured of his ailments or his ennui.

Of all the gossip that Ségur brought back, nothing interested La Fayette so much as the report that England's American colonies were in revolt. He was strangely fascinated and talked of little else for days. Then the Duke of Gloucester arrived at Metz with his Duchess. The Duke had had a falling out with his brother George III, precisely over those American colonies, and was travelling on the continent for his health.

The Count de Broglie, a brother of the Marshal Duke de Broglie, commander *ad interim* of the Trois Evêchés and acting Governor of Lorraine, gave a dinner for the Duke of Gloucester and invited La Fayette, Noailles and Ségur. At dinner the Duke talked about the insurrection in America. His courier had just brought him letters with the latest news and, in view of his relations with his brother just then, the news did not displease him and he took no pains to conceal the fact. Sitting there at the long table, surrounded by his brother officers, La Fayette drank in with avidity all that the Duke said. He plied the Duke with questions and the Duke's replies increased his enthusiasm. Before the dinner was over he had determined to go to America, to "join his colours" and fight for liberty, and, above all, despoil England of her thirteen colonies, "the loveliest portion of the British territory," and avenge France for the humiliation of the Seven Years' War and the Treaty of Paris.

Noailles and Ségur were as enthusiastic as he; they talked all night about the great adventure. They would all three go, but for the present they must keep it a secret.

He must speak to the Count de Broglie, of course; he could confide in him. The Count, at fifty-five, could still sympathize with these young fellows. And yet, at first, he shook his head.

"I saw your uncle killed in the war in Italy," he said. "I was present when your father fell at the battle of Minden, and I don't like to contribute to the ruin of the only remaining branch of the family."

But La Fayette's mind was made up, and it was not hard to win over the Count.

V

Had La Fayette but known, the idea of an adventure in America was no new thing to the Count de Broglie. He had once had precisely the same ambition himself, though on a grander scale, and now the ardour of La Fayette suddenly revived it in his mind. Perhaps, after all, the thing was still possible.

The Count de Broglie was a disappointed man. He had not succeeded as he had hoped, nor probably as he had deserved. He had been the intimate friend of the Duke de Choiseul, in the days when Choiseul was Louis XV's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Choiseul, in his prime and heyday, had been the most influential man at Court. He was a dashing and elegant *roué* and a cynical wit, but he was a great minister and a great patriot; the defeat of France in the Seven Years' War rankled like a personal insult, and looking about for some way to avenge it his roving, perspicacious eye had fallen on the American colonies; there, he perceived, was the place to strike England. He talked it over with Broglie; they would stir up a revolt in the American colonies and attach them to the French crown; that

would humiliate and injure England, rehabilitate the finances and restore the glory of France. And he would make Broglie—who was about the only friend whom he had not placed in some good situation—Governor-General of the American colonies, a kind of Viceroy and Prince of America. This understanding between Choiseul and Broglie must have been reached as early as 1764, for with this end in view Choiseul in that year had sent a secret agent to the colonies in the person of M. de Pontleroy, a lieutenant in the navy who, under the name of Beaulieu, went out and secured a great deal of information for the Duke.

But in 1767 Choiseul had sent another agent, introduced to him by Broglie. This man was Baron de Kalb, a Prussian born at Hüttendorf, June 29, 1721. He was not a baron, and he had no right to a particle in his name—*de* or *von* or any other. He was plain Johann Kalb, and a soldier of fortune; but no matter; he was a shrewd, solid, dependable man, who knew French, German and English, and was not too scrupulous for the work Broglie and Choiseul employed him in. He was a good soldier, brave as a lion, had served on the staff of Count de Broglie and on the staff of his brother the Marshal Duke de Broglie, fought by Broglie's side at Rosbach and at Bergen, risen to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and the Broglies, both the Count and his brother, had tried to obtain for him the rank of brigadier-general. Choiseul, indeed, had promised it, but the promotion had never been made; everybody recognized Kalb's merits, but a minister hardly dared to appoint a foreigner to a high grade.

Kalb was instructed to proceed to America, inform himself of the disposition of the colonists and find out what they needed in the way of arms, munitions and money in order to

undertake, successfully, a revolt against the English government. He had an audience of Choiseul, bade his wife goodbye, and on October 4, 1767, embarked at Falmouth on a merchant vessel, the *Hercules,* Captain Hammet, and after a long and stormy voyage lasting three months, with head winds all the way, the *Hercules,* almost a wreck, reached the mouth of the Delaware. Kalb embarked in a small coasting vessel that beat against wind and icy sleet, until, at six o'clock in the evening of January 28, 1768, they arrived in New York Bay. The bay was blocked with ice; Kalb was advised to stay the night with his companions and his guide on Staten Island, but they set out that same evening in an open boat that carried four horses and was manned by four sailors. The wind rose to a gale, the tide was against them, and a pitiless driving sleet froze as it fell upon their backs. They reached the quay at New York and tried to make a landing, but the boat filled with water. In getting it afloat they broke three of their four oars, and were borne on the racing tide out to sea. They grounded on an island; the boat was swamped; men and horses swam about pell-mell; they gained a mud bank, their boots full of icy water, their clothes frozen stiff as planks, and unable to go forward because of thick brambles and blinding snow, they stamped down a small space in the bushes and huddled there until morning. Some of Kalb's companions died from exposure; others were lamed for life by frozen feet. Kalb did not even catch cold.

Once he had time to look about him, Kalb began to write reports to the Duke de Choiseul, long, meticulous reports, thorough, full of details, in the German style, too frank and honest to be encouraging, for Kalb found no disposition to shake off the English domination, especially with the aid of a foreign power. The colonists were not

heavily taxed; all the troops employed in the colonies were paid by England, and the colonists themselves were all English or of English origin and the privileges they had so long enjoyed only increased "the pride and arrogance natural to the English nation."

In June, 1768, Kalb returned to France, but when he presented himself in the Duke's antechamber he was put off. Day after day he cooled his heels and this went on for weeks. He succeeded in sending to the inaccessible Choiseul a detailed report of the forces of England on land and sea; four days later Choiseul wrote him a curt note to say that his figures were greatly exaggerated. This brief, dry response, however, could not discourage Kalb, who at once prepared a long, more circumstantially detailed and thorough report. But he received no acknowledgment. Seven months passed; he had not even seen Choiseul. When at last, at one of the Duke's public receptions, he did secure a moment with him, Choiseul, without permitting Kalb to open his mouth, said:

"You came back from America too soon; your work is useless to me, and hereafter you need not take the trouble to send me news of that country.'

The fact was that Choiseul was bored to death by Kalb's interminable reports and had long since stopped reading them. He had lost interest in the American project; he and Broglie had a new and even more brilliant scheme. Choiseul had secured a place for Broglie as chief of the King's secret correspondence, and turned over to him the direction of the diplomatic secret service. And Broglie had devised an ambitious plan for the invasion of England, which had been laid before the King and approved. But La Rozière, one of Broglie's aides, on a dangerous mission mapping the English coast, had foolishly confided the secret to the Cheva-

lier d'Eon, a secretary in the French Embassy in London, and the Chevalier had used it to levy blackmail on Louis XV. The scandal had been immense, and nearly ruined Broglie. To make matters worse, it was just at this juncture that Madame Du Barry, not so patient with Choiseul's arrogance as Kalb had been, had brought about the Duke's fall, and he was exiled to his estates at Chanteloup. And Kalb went back to his regiment under Broglie's command, grumbling, not without reason, at the ingratitude of princes. Broglie could sympathize with him; Broglie had failed of advancement, too, but it was best to wait; luck might turn. They waited five years and Kalb, discouraged, had decided to seek service in some other country where his talents would be more appreciated.

Then the Duke of Gloucester came to Metz and Broglie gave him the dinner; and Broglie told Kalb to be patient a little longer; he might have something for him to do.

VI

Early in the winter La Fayette returned to Paris, called by the approaching confinement of his wife, and on December 15, 1775, she gave birth to a daughter, who was christened Adrienne Henriette Catherine Charlotte. But this happy event did not turn his thoughts from his darling project for long.

Paris was wild about the Americans, and talked day and night of the *"insurgens,"* the Bostonians, Lexington and Concord. Smart people no longer played "whisk"; they played "Boston." England was at last struck in a vital spot, *la perfide Albion* was to be brought low, humbled in the dust.

The Count de Broglie, his brief day as Governor of the

Trois Evêchés over, returned to Paris, and La Fayette saw him as often as he could; but the plan matured slowly. The Count, though sympathetic, was strangely uncommunicative and mysterious, kept putting him off, and La Fayette found himself no forwarder with his schemes for glory and renown. Broglie told him to be patient and wait. He was not patient, but he waited, nearly a year, meanwhile wondering what the Count was about.

For the Count was not idle; he was dashing back and forth between Versailles and his country place at Ruffec, where he was closeted with Vergennes, now in Choiseul's old place at the Foreign Office, carrying out Choiseul's old policies; for events, more potent than kings or their mistresses, were forcing upon the King's government the policy that Choiseul had favoured long ago. Old Maupeou had gone down in ridicule. The Count de Maurepas had succeeded him as Prime Minister and had made Vergennes Minister of Foreign Affairs. Vergennes was, indeed, in a way, Choiseul's man; Choiseul had discovered him and had made him Ambassador at Constantinople; he was there when Louis XVI came to the throne. Vergennes had none of the brilliancy and dash of Choiseul; he was a man of lowly birth, Charles Brenier by name, obliged to make his own way in the world; he was shrewd, clever, knew how to make himself useful to those above him, was insinuating and a flatterer, with all the wiles of the politician, and the vision of the statesman. He had a way of making Maurepas, who, at seventy-three, was a frivolous, weary and disillusioned old man, think that he himself was the author of the policies that Vergennes suggested. Vergennes was already involved in a bewildering maze of intrigue, with ramifications over half Europe, doing his best to help the

American colonies and at the same time to keep Lord Stormont, the English Ambassador, from finding it out.

During the last days of 1775 he prepared, for the eyes of the King and old Maurepas alone, a memorandum, entitled "Reflections," which formulated a programme: if the American colonies were not aided, they could only fail; the French must lose no opportunity of enfeebling England and must therefore favour the independence of the colonies in insurrection. "Reasons of state always outweighed every other consideration, and all means were just, legitimate and even necessary, provided they were efficacious."

It was while Vergennes was formulating these practical "Reflections" and the "Mémoire de Considérations" that followed it, that the Count de Broglie presented Kalb to him. On November 4, 1776, a leave of absence for two years was granted to Kalb "to be employed in the Colonies," with a promise of the "recompense and distinctions justified by the enterprise and the rank of Brigadier-General at the first occasion." On November 5, 1776, Broglie went out to Passy to call on Silas Deane, one of the three Commissioners lately appointed to represent the United States at the Court of Versailles; the other two, Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee, had not arrived, but were expected from day to day. Broglie called; in fact, he called twice that day, and took with him Kalb, whom he presented as an able, valiant and experienced officer, with an independent fortune and certain of advancement in France, but such a zealous friend of civil and religious liberty, moved by such noble and disinterested motives, that he wished to offer his sword to the United States.

Deane swallowed it whole. He reported to the Congress at Philadelphia that "the Count Broglie, who commanded

the French army in the late war," had done him the honour to call on him twice the day before, and introduced the Baron. "I could by no means," he added, "allow to escape an occasion of engaging a person of such great experience and who is recommended by everybody as one of the most capable and valiant officers of the realm."

Meanwhile Noailles and Ségur had come to Paris, eager to join La Fayette in the American adventure, and the Marquis, hearing that Broglie was in town, called on him to see if there was not some chance. To his joy the Count said that he had found the very man for him and introduced Kalb. The next day, November 6, 1776, the Baron took him, with Noailles and Ségur, to call on Silas Deane. When Kalb presented them, with all the deference due their station, and explained that they were three noblemen, officers in the King's army, who belonged to the ancient house of Noailles (Ségur was about to marry Mademoiselle Marie d'Aguesseau, a young half-sister of the Duchess d'Ayen) and that they enjoyed the highest rank at Court, Deane was quite dazzled. Kalb, who could speak English, acted as interpreter, and descanted on the great social position of the sprigs of the ancient house of Noailles, the éclat that their departure for America would give to the cause of the colonists. If the youthful faces of the three aspirants caused Deane to hesitate, their titles were reassuring; he was vastly impressed; it was pleasant to a sterling republican like him to receive such distinguished persons, and he formed a higher opinion than ever of the Baron de Kalb. In fact, he assured the young men that their services would be accepted, though they would have to wait a little, until a chance to send them to America presented itself. Kalb charged them to keep the whole matter a strict secret for the present. They came away delighted.

VII

La Fayette waited, as he had been doing now for more than a year. Deane had promised that they should go as soon as arrangements could be made, but somehow arrangements could not be made. Something stood in the way, something mysterious, intangible and yet, insurmountable. Deane would talk of the difficulties of the struggle in which the young nation was engaged, the risks and dangers that he and Noailles and Ségur would run, the rude existence they would have to endure in America. But all this only sharpened their eagerness. However, they waited, promising one another to keep the project secret in order to sound the dispositions of the Court. They waited, and nothing happened, and then Noailles, thinking that they had waited long enough, went to his father-in-law, the Duke d'Ayen, and asked him to procure them commissions to go to America.

The Duke heard Noailles, controlled his anger admirably and promised to speak to the Count de Vergennes. He did so, at once, and the obliging Vergennes not only wrote a letter, but got the Prime Minister to write one, refusing the commissions, and forbidding the young men to go to America. Armed with these letters, the Duke returned home, and the three young gentlemen, with a sharp reprimand, were ordered to abandon their foolish and romantic project.

Noailles and Ségur were in consternation. La Fayette had a fortune of his own, but they were not so favourably situated; before they could go to America they would have to raise the wind. However, there was nothing for it; they gave in. But not so La Fayette; he said nothing at home, but his resolution was hardening into stubbornness.

The horse, at sight of the whip, prepared to throw his rider. The Count de Broglie, in those autumn days of 1776, was at Ruffec, but his secretary, M. Duboismartin, was in Paris, and La Fayette went to see him. One day in December they dined with the Viscount de Mauroy. The Baron de Kalb was there, and the Marquis de Lambert, and several other officers, among them M. de La Rozière, who had fought under Broglie at Rosbach and Bergen, and risked his neck as a spy in mapping the coast of Great Britain to be used in the plan for the invasion of England.

The Viscount de Mauroy was one of Broglie's most intimate friends, and he and Lambert had served under him. The officers were all strangely excited, except Kalb, who was sunk in Teutonic melancholy. Then, to La Fayette's amazement, they told him that they were setting out for Havre that very day to sail in the *Seine* for America. It took away his breath, and he was as near despair as his hopeful nature ever allowed him to be. It was a bitter thing to sit there with all these officers who were going out to America and not be able to go himself. The trouble was that they did not take him quite seriously enough! The old Prussian was fifty, a hardened veteran of the wars—and of a thousand intrigues—whilst he was but a boy of nineteen, with the rank of captain. However, when the dinner was over, and the moment had come for them to leave, he was game; he bade Kalb good-bye and wished him *bon voyage*.

When they had gone, La Fayette stayed behind to have a talk with Duboismartin. They talked for three hours, and La Fayette told him of those notes from Vergennes and Maurepas forbidding the young gentlemen of the house of Noailles to go to America. He could expect from his

family of course nothing but opposition; they would put in his way every obstacle they could; but fortunately they were now all reassured and happy in the thought that, like Noailles and Ségur, he had given up the idea. He was determined to go, and told Duboismartin that he would write to the Count de Broglie at Ruffec to ask his "instructions." He wrote the letter and gave it to Duboismartin, saying that he would follow the Count's advice. He did not even dare to tell his wife; she was soon to have another baby, and he must keep his purpose from her. He must rely on himself; he would go now, in spite of everything. They should see! And in this mood, perhaps to strengthen his purpose and to keep it ever in mind, he changed his device; in place of the old motto of the cadet branch of the family, *vis sat contra fatum,* he now inscribed on his coat of arms *Cur non?,* the motto of the old Marquis de La Fayette, Marshal of France, who had fought under Jeanne d'Arc. He would emulate the bravery and audacity of the La Fayettes. He would be master of his own destiny. Why not?

VIII

Nevertheless, in spite of all these noble high resolves, he could do nothing but wait until he heard from Broglie, remote and enigmatic at Ruffec. He was still waiting, as he had been doing for more than a year, and here was Kalb, already out at sea. Kalb had got on better with Deane than he had done, with all his name and rank at Court; Kalb evidently knew his way about in the mansion at Passy. But somehow he did not. It was all bewildering —and slightly humiliating.

But in point of fact, poor Deane was as bewildered as he was. His house was swarming with broken officers and

adventurers of all nations, with spies, agents and furnishers, and he could not resist their importunities. Kalb had easily gained his confidence because Kalb could speak English; Kalb had been in America, and could talk with him about things at home.

Thus it had not been difficult for the Baron to induce Deane, on December 1, 1776, to enroll him and the Viscount de Mauroy as major-generals in the American army, their rank to date from November 7, 1776, and four lieutenant-colonels, four majors, two captains and four lieutenants, all of them officers of Broglie's *entourage*. They were to proceed to America, and form the Count's staff when he arrived to take up his duties as viceroy and commander-in-chief.

Deane, a Connecticut lawyer, naïve and inexperienced, a simple colonial far from home, in a strange land, on a mission that would have perplexed and tried the most shifty and disenchanted old diplomat, was no match for those politicians, adventurers, soldiers of fortune, past-masters in the arts of intrigue and dissimulation, who thronged the *salons* of the mansion at Passy. He knew little of the cynical spirit or the slippery manœuvres of the chancelleries of Europe, and less of those polite forms under which they cloaked their selfish designs. He had not even known enough to communicate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs the Declaration of American Independence, and it was only after waiting three months, and receiving a delicate hint from Vergennes, that he got one of the diplomatists at Paris to draw up a letter, couched in protocolary terms, to notify His Most Christian Majesty's Government of the historic event.

He had arrived at Paris armed with letters to Dr. Barbier-

Dubourg and Leroy de Chaumont, who had the fat contract for furnishing the uniforms of the French army. M. de Chaumont had placed at Deane's disposition the mansion at Passy, a gracious act of not wholly disinterested hospitality inspired by the hope that Deane would make him his purchaser of supplies and munitions. Deane accepted M. de Chaumont's hospitality, but passed him no contracts. He found a better man.

Dr. Dubourg had arranged a secret meeting between Deane and the Count de Vergennes, and in the course of a long conversation the Minister of Foreign Affairs told Deane that he could discuss in all confidence any question of importance, such for instance as the purchase of arms and provisions, with Beaumarchais. Beaumarchais's name was Pierre Augustin Caron; he was the son of a watch-maker, born in the rue Saint-Denis, a child of the people, with all the wit, gaiety and impudence of a street arab of Paris. He had invented a new escapement for watches which introduced him to the Court as furnisher, wormed his way into the confidence of Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV, used his opportunities shrewdly, married a rich widow, and blossomed forth as the Count de Beaumarchais. He wrote plays, was admired by Voltaire and became exceedingly popular. When Vergennes needed some one of intelligence in London—the French Ambassador at the Court of St. James at the time was the Count de Guines, a vain and pompous nullity, part of the debris of Madame Du Barry's *salon*—he sent Beaumarchais as a secret agent. In London Beaumarchais became thick as thieves with John Wilkes, the demagogue, who convinced him that England was on the brink of a revolution, and through Wilkes, Beaumarchais made the acquaintance of Arthur Lee, one of the

American commissioners, and with him concluded an arrangement by which the colonies, in return for secret aid, were to enter into a commercial treaty with France, assuring her all the benefits of the trade that previously had gone to England.

Vergennes induced the King to furnish the colonies with a million *livres* and asked Florida Blanca, Prime Minister of Charles III, King of Spain, to furnish a like amount, and with this money Beaumarchais was to disguise, under the appearance of a private commercial enterprise, the efforts of Vergennes to arm and provision the American colonies. Beaumarchais, constantly back and forth between Paris and London—and between crossings writing *The Barber of Seville*—had founded the fictitious trading house of Roderigue Hortalès & Co., with headquarters at Nantes, and branches in Holland, Spain and even England, and began to furnish the colonies with clothes, guns, powder and munitions.

Then there was Tronson du Coudray, an officer of artillery in the French army; he, too, wished to go to America, and had induced Deane to promise him the rank of major-general and chief of the engineer corps with command of the artillery, and under the orders of the Count de Saint-Germain, Minister of War, du Coudray was then ransacking all the arsenals of France for obsolete guns to be shipped to America by the vessels of Hortalès & Co. Du Coudray was ambitious, self-seeking, and a trouble maker, and it was not long before he and Beaumarchais were at daggers drawn; du Coudray wished to be the only one to go to America, and when Deane enrolled a full complement of officers to serve as his staff, he made ready to give Beaumarchais and Hortalès & Co. the slip, and to sail in the *Amphitrite*.

Events had advanced to this point when Kalb and the viceregal staff arrived at Havre, on December 10, 1776. The *Amphitrite,* on which du Coudray and his staff were to sail, the *Seine,* on which Kalb and the Viceroy's staff were to embark, and the *Romain* were ready for sea. Beaumarchais had been at Havre for three days to superintend the final preparations. Everything was in readiness.

Then something happened. An order came from the government forbidding the ships to sail; Lord Stormont knew all about it, and had made a terrible protest at Versailles. And this was not all; Kalb had a letter from Duboismartin telling him to return to Paris; Silas Deane had been advised that Benjamin Franklin had debarked in France.

Duboismartin enclosed a long letter of *bon voyage* from the Count de Broglie, congratulating Kalb on the excellent progress of the affair, and giving him instructions to follow at Philadelphia. The rank of the one chosen as military and political dictator should be very high, "as for example, that of the Prince of Nassau."

When you propose this man [wrote the Count], you naturally must act as if you did not know that he desired such a position; at the same time you will make them comprehend that he would consent to make such a sacrifice only on extraordinary conditions. . . . Confine yourself to asking that the man be designated as the supreme military power; he would unite in himself the quality of general and president of the Council of War, the title of generalissimo, marshal, etc. Naturally it will be necessary to stipulate great pecuniary advantages, and important payment for the time that will follow his return. . . . If things turn out well, it will be well to get the Congress to send *le petit* Duboismartin back immediately with orders and powers to M. Deane. . . . When you send me back *le petit Dubois* you will inform me of the real situation of affairs and

the state of feeling. Adieu! I wish you, as well as your caravan, a pleasant voyage.

Kalb did not like to return to Paris, and perhaps miss a chance of sailing, for Beaumarchais was moving heaven and earth to have the embargo lifted, but he sat down at once and wrote out a long "opinion," in his thorough style, and in English, entitling it "Project of which the execution would perhaps decide the success of the cause of the liberty of the United States of North America without making it appear that the Court of France has, for the present, the least part in it."

This document, twice as long as the Declaration of Independence, opened by comparing the situation of the struggling young United States to that of the States of Holland, and argued that the method found so advantageous in establishing the republic in the Low Countries would produce the same effect in the case of the United States. He suggested that the American Congress ask the King of France to send them a man—whom he proceeded to describe —to act as military and civil chief, a temporary generalissimo of the new Republic. What the struggling colonies needed was a chief with a great military reputation, who, to a great experience in war, would join a name already made illustrious by many heroes in his family. . . . In saying this the Baron did not wish to underestimate the glory or the ability of the officers then in command; on the contrary, he thought that they had conducted themselves bravely and well, especially General Washington. . . . The Baron's man would obtain the best officers, and put each individual in his proper place; he would be followed by all the young noblemen of the Court simply for the honour of serving and distinguishing themselves under his eyes, and these young noblemen could determine the King to go to war

with England. This general in chief would be obliged to push the war with honour to himself, and consequently with advantage to the cause, because he would regard the loss of his reputation as the greatest of all losses. Such a man would be equal, by himself alone, to twenty thousand troops.

"Such a man can be found, and I believe that I have found him and I am sure that once he is known he will receive the approval of the public, of all sensible men, of all soldiers, and I dare assert, of all Europe. The question is to persuade him, which cannot be done, from what I know, unless sufficient honours should be accumulated to satisfy his ambition, such as making him a Field-Marshal and giving him a considerable sum of money in cash."

Kalb sent this document to Silas Deane on December 17, 1776, with a note asking him to present it with his respects to Dr. Franklin. "I submit to his judgment and to that of yourself the enclosed *mémoire* containing my opinion on what I suggested to you one day at Paris."

But Beaumarchais could not induce the government to lift the embargo. In encouraging or conniving at the ambitious enterprise of Broglie, Vergennes had gone too far. It was all the work of the jealous du Coudray, who, to checkmate Beaumarchais and Kalb, had blown the gaff. Something more than Vergennes' protestations, even though made with his hand on his heart, was necessary now to convince Lord Stormont of the neutrality of France, and the government drew back. The game was up. The disappointed Kalb, his spirits as gloomy as the winter night that drenched Havre with its bitter rain, saw his fine project ruined, and advised his officers to go home. The brilliant staff of the Prince of America dispersed, and the Baron returned to Paris, to wait for better times.

IX

A few days later La Fayette was astonished to hear that Kalb was back in Paris. Then he received a letter from the Count de Broglie asking him to come at once to Ruffec with Kalb. They went to Ruffec, and there in the library of the *château* they held a council of war, lasting several days. The Count de Broglie was positive and emphatic; "the voyage to America must not be abandoned under any pretext, no matter what obstacles present themselves." By an odd coincidence Duboismartin was precisely of the same opinion. The Count would not blink the fact that the moment was a difficult one. The fall of New York, the report that Washington was in retreat with only three thousand men, had discouraged the enemies of England; the stern protests of Lord Stormont had frightened Maurepas and compelled Vergennes to act; American corsairs had been ordered to leave French ports; the ships of Hortalès & Co. were not allowed to sail—no use now to try to get across the sea in one of them! They must have a ship of their own. But where were they to get it? It would cost a lot of money. They looked at the rich young Marquis, and with the gesture of a grand seigneur he brushed this trifling objection aside. He would charter or buy a ship, of course. But the Count said that they must be prudent; they could not sail from Havre or Nantes, or any of the northern ports—perhaps not from any port of France at all. Then the Count had a happy idea; there was Duboismartin's brother, a lieutenant of infantry (the one to whom Broglie in his letter to Kalb had referred as *le petit Dubois*) just back from Port au Prince to buy provisions for his regiment; he had made his purchases at Bordeaux and knew all the shipowners and agents there. Broglie would send *le*

petit Dubois to Bordeaux to buy a vessel; he was the very man for that sort of thing. And so it was decided; La Fayette was to buy a vessel and he and Kalb, with, of course, a proper staff, were to embark for America at once. La Fayette and Kalb posted back to Paris to make arrangements with Silas Deane.

It was rather risky to see Deane just then; the house at Passy was constantly shadowed by Lord Stormont's spies. Besides, Deane himself was in low spirits; the reverses in America, though perhaps exaggerated in the reports that took so long to cross the sea, had discouraged him. Deane, already tormented by Arthur Lee's jealous and envious machinations, was losing heart, beginning to despair of the success of the cause, and to wonder if it would not be best for the colonies to submit. He sent word to La Fayette by his secretary Carmichael that in the circumstances it would be better to postpone the plan.

And then La Fayette lost his patience and his temper; he demanded with his most peremptory air to see Deane personally and at once; no secretary would do!

Carmichael ran to fetch his chief.

"Heretofore," the Marquis said to the Yankee lawyer and politician, "I have been able to show you only my willingness to aid you in your struggle; the time has now come when that willingness may be put to effective use, for I am going to buy a ship and to take your officers out in it. Let us not give up hope yet; it is precisely in time of danger that I wish to share whatever fortune may have in store for you!"

And Deane gave in.

The details were left to Kalb; he could go to see Deane without exciting such comment as visits of the Marquis would have done. Weeks passed, and they were in Feb-

ruary, 1777, before Kalb finally arranged for the enrolment of the Marquis and himself as major-generals and of eleven others as staff officers. The agreement ran:

LIST OF OFFICERS OF INFANTRY AND LIGHT TROOPS DESTINED TO SERVE IN THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA

Names of Officers	*Rank*	*Commencement of their Pay from the*
M. de La Fayette	major-general	7th December 1776
Baron de Kalb	major-general	7th November
Delesser	colonel	1st December
De Valfort	colonel	1st December
De Fayols	lieutenant-colonel	20th November
De Franval	lieutenant-colonel	1st December
Dubois Martin	major	7th December
De Gimat	major	1st December
De Vrigny	captain	1st December
De Bedaulx Capitaine	captain	1st December
De la Colombe	lieutenant	1st December
Candon	lieutenant	7th November

The ranks and the pay, which the most honourable Congress shall affix to them to commence at the periods marked in the present list, have been agreed to by me the undersigned, Silas Deane, in quality of deputy of the American States general on the one part, the Marquis de La Fayette and the Baron de Kalb on the other part. Signed double at Paris this 7th of December, 1776.

SILAS DEANE
THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE
DE KALB

Of these Kalb, Duboismartin, Fayols, Vrigny and Candon had been members of the vice-regal staff that was to have sailed on the *Seine*, and Kalb got Deane to antedate the agreement as of December 7, 1776, the day the vice-

regal staff had signed on, in order to secure to them the rank accorded in the first place. There was, too, another reason; since the arrival of Franklin, Deane was no longer the sole representative of the States, and fearing to ask Franklin's consent, he made it appear that the agreement had been executed at a time when he had authority to act alone.

Le petit Dubois came back from Bordeaux and reported that he had bought a small frigate, but that she could not be fitted out for sea before the middle of March. Thus La Fayette had a month on his hands before he could be off. He did not consider the prohibition of the government to have been very seriously intended; he knew the feeling at Court, and that the disavowals of Vergennes were nothing more than the polite insincerities of diplomacy, which deceived no one, Lord Stormont and the Court of St. James least of all. He even had hopes that, when the time came, his father-in-law and the family of Noailles would give in; in fact, he should not be surprised if, at the last moment, the Duke were to decide to go himself; he would like nothing better than such an adventure. And yet, he dared not let his secret out; he saw Deane again, and drew up a supplementary agreement in two parts, the first of which was this.

The desire which the Marquis de La Fayette shows of serving among the troops of the United States of North America, and the interest which he takes in the justice of their cause make him wish to distinguish himself in this war, and to render himself as useful as he possibly can; but not thinking that he can obtain leave of his family to pass the seas, and serve in a foreign country till he can go as a general officer, I have thought I could not better serve my country, and those who have intrusted me, than by granting to him in the name of the very honourable Congress the rank of Major-General which I beg the States to confirm to him, and to ratify and deliver to him the commission

to hold and take rank, to count from this day, with the general officers of the same degree. His high birth, his alliances, the great dignities which his family holds at this Court, his considerable estates in this realm, his personal merit, his reputation, his disinterestedness, and above all his zeal for the liberty of our provinces, are such as to induce me alone to promise him the rank of Major-General in the name of the United States. In witness of which I have signed the present, this 7th day of December, 1776.

SILAS DEANE

The other part ran:

On the conditions here explained I offer myself and promise to depart when and how Mr. Deane shall judge proper, to serve the United States with all possible zeal, without any pension or particular allowance, reserving to myself the liberty of returning to Europe when my family or my King shall recall me.

Done at Paris this 7th December, 1776.

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

While the ship was fitting out at Bordeaux La Fayette decided to pay a long-promised visit to his uncle, the Marquis de Noailles, who had succeeded the Marquis de Guines as Ambassador in London. Such a visit, at such a time, would allay suspicion, throw the family off the scent and add all the more éclat to his act when he did go to America. And so, with his cousin, the Prince de Poix, he went to London. He spent three weeks at the Embassy, in the whirl of society. He was invited everywhere, attended a ball at the house of Lord George Germain, Under-Secretary of State for the colonies, was presented to General Sir Henry Clinton at the opera, breakfasted with Lord Shelbourne, made the acquaintance of Lord Rawdon, just back from America and plied him with questions, and formed a friendship with General Fitz Patrick of the British army. He

made no secret of his American sentiments, but wherever he went, took pains to parade them and rejoiced openly at the success of the "rebels" at Trenton. It was precisely the thing to appeal to the liberal, sentimental English mind—this young French nobleman, from the Court of Louis XVI, with whom they all knew England was soon to be at war, come over to beard the lion in his den. He was taken up by the great Whig families, who largely shared his sympathies for the colonists, and even the Tories showed him attentions. The Ambassador, little dreaming of the scheme maturing at that moment under the powdered head, was never so proud as when his nephew made a leg at Court. He presented him in the levee room at St. James's and the tall young Marquis, in the Court dress of Versailles, made his bow to George III. He was struck by the affability of this dull, kindly middle-aged man in the embroidered coat and ribbon and star. The King was out of humour with everything American, but he was obliging to the Marquis, though, as the Marquis reflected with a certain qualm, the King had no suspicion of the blow he was about to deal him. But he scorned to take any mean advantage of him, and when he was invited to visit Portsmouth and inspect a military expedition that was fitting out for America, he refused; he would not use his opportunities to learn any military secrets, and the memory of that presentation and the few words of English that he picked up were all he brought away from London.

It was time to be off; here they were, in March, and the ship was to be ready for sea by the 15th. The Ambassador could not understand why he wished to return home; was he not having a pleasant time? Was he not the lion of Mayfair? What more could he desire? Besides there was to be a drawing-room at Court, to which he was commanded.

But no; he had been seized by a fancy, a sudden whim, to go to Paris for a day or two; he didn't wish his family to know; he would come back soon to finish his visit. In that case, of course; if it was a question of a pretty face, the Marquis de Noailles understood perfectly and sympathized, and he would say to the family, if inquiries were made, that Gilbert was slightly indisposed and resting quietly at the Embassy.

Before he left La Fayette wrote a letter to the Duke d'Ayen.

You will be astonished, my dear Papa, by what I am going to tell you; it has cost me more than I can express not to consult you. My respect and tenderness for you and my confidence in you must assure you of that, but my word has been given, and you would not have esteemed me if I had failed to keep it; instead of that the step that I am taking will give you, I hope, a good opinion of my good will at least. I have found a unique occasion to distinguish myself and to learn my profession: I am a general officer in the army of the United States of America. My zeal for their cause and my frankness won their confidence. On my side I have done all that I could for them, and their interests will always be dearer to me than my own. In short, my dear Papa, at this moment I am in London, still waiting for news from my friends; as soon as I have any, I will leave here, and, without stopping at Paris, I shall go and embark on a vessel that I have chartered and that belongs to me. My companions are Monsieur the Baron de Kalb, an officer of the greatest distinction, brigadier in the King's armies, and, like myself, major-general in the service of the United States and a few excellent officers who are good enough to wish to share my adventures. I am in the greatest joy to have found such a splendid occasion to do something and to instruct myself. I know very well that I am making enormous sacrifices, and that it will cost me more than anybody to leave my family, my friends, and you, my dear Papa, because I love them better than anybody ever loved. But the voyage is not long; every day people make longer ones merely

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

FROM A PORTRAIT BY DANLOUX IN THE MUSÉE CARNAVALET.

for pleasure, and besides I hope to return worthier of all those who will be kind enough to regret me. Adieu, my dear Papa, I hope to see you soon; continue to give me your tenderness, I wish very much to deserve it, and I do deserve it already by the tenderness that I feel for you, and the respect that all his life will be shown you by

Your affectionate son,

La Fayette.

Then, having written the letter, he feared to send it. He was not quite sure how the Duke would take it; he might lose his temper and fly out. He set out with the letter in his pocket, and after a wretched crossing arrived at Paris, took care to see none of his family, not even his young wife, and hid in Kalb's modest house at Chaillot. There he added a postscript to his letter:

I arrive in Paris for a moment, my dear Papa, taking only the time to bid you adieu. I wished to write to my uncle and to Madame de Lusignem, but I am so pressed for time that I beg you to charge yourself with my homage to them.

But still he hesitated, not daring to send it. Doubts were preying on his mind; his conscience was beginning to trouble him. He decided to wait until he got to Bordeaux. He lay in hiding at Kalb's house for three days, saw no one, and went out only once, at night, to bid good-bye to Deane, not at the house at Passy, but in the house of one of Kalb's friends. Then, he had to witness a more touching scene in the small house at Chaillot when Kalb said good-bye to his wife, his daughter and two little sons. Madame de Kalb was heart-broken, but in her sobs she told Kalb to go, and in low spirits, he went, sick at heart.

It was nightfall on March 16 when the two major-generals set out at last in La Fayette's coach, drawn by post-horses.

The Marquis travelled as simply as possible, taking only two valets with him. They drove fast and, lying but one night on the road, arrived at Bordeaux on the evening of the 19th.

The Marquis was short of ready money, for he had had to lay out forty thousand *livres* in cash as a payment on the vessel; he was to pay the balance, seventy-two thousand *livres,* within a year from the following June. Deane had advanced twelve thousand francs to Kalb, and the Marquis borrowed this and thirty-five hundred francs besides. La Fayette paid the expenses of the journey to Bordeaux, except the horses on the first relay from Paris, which Kalb had paid for and not failed to keep account of. Kalb had an annoying habit of keeping a meticulous account of every *sou* they spent, which was absurd, for he, of course, would pay everything himself. When they arrived at Bordeaux the Marquis invited all the young bloods of the town to sup with him at the inn, and, in his lordly way told his servants to pay the bill. Kalb was distressed. Then the Marquis left to make his duties to his uncle, Marshal Duke de Mouchy, Governor of the Province of Guyenne, while Kalb went to look after the ship and to assume command until the Marquis should join. The *Victoire,* as the small frigate was significantly named, was commanded by Skipper Le Boursier, and was taking on her cargo, which La Fayette, in his indifference to expense, had bought with the ship. Nothing, in fact, was ready, and Kalb, with an old soldier's impatience to be off, and a fond husband's reluctance to go at all, began to grumble.

But it was time to send the letter to his father-in-law, if he was ever going to send it at all; and the Marquis wrote letters, one to the Count de Broglie and one to his friend the Prince de Coigny, to whom he sent the letter to the

Duke d'Ayen, asking Coigny to inform him of its effect, to reconcile his family to his going and to obtain at least the tacit consent of the government, for as an officer of the King he did not like to leave without permission. He sent a courier to Paris with these letters—and some that Kalb had written to his wife—and waited. He sent a courier to Paris every day. All this hot dispatching of couriers meant that, after his jaunty defiance of King and father-in-law, dashing away without a word to a young wife about to have another baby, the Marquis was not quite so sure of his own mind. But he said nothing to Kalb.

Kalb did his best to hasten the loading; the maritime police were to be feared, the orders to allow no ships bound for America to leave French ports, while obviously intended only to satisfy England, were nevertheless still in force, and even if by accident an agent of the admiralty were to apply them to the *Victoire* the dream would vanish. On March 21, Kalb and Duboismartin, Bedaulx, La Colombe and Candon were enrolled as passengers; and on the same day a young American of twenty-two years, named Leonard Price, sent by Deane—Kalb wrote the name as he pronounced it, Brice—went aboard. The 22nd, La Fayette, Fayols, Vrigny, Valfort and Lesser were enrolled; the 24th, Capitaine and a new arrival, the Chevalier du Buysson, another friend and protégé of the Count de Broglie, who was to have sailed on the *Seine* as a member of the staff of the Viceroy, put in their appearance.

La Fayette was entered on the ship's register as the "Sieur Gilbert de Motie, chevalier de Chavaillac"—Skipper Le Boursier having the usual French indifference to the orthography of proper names—and signed himself simply "Gilbert du Motier." The title of Chevalier de Chavaniac was one scarcely known outside of lower Auvergne, and the better

to conceal his identity he enrolled himself among the servants whom the officers were taking with them. His two valets were entered as Jean Simon Camus, aged thirty-two, and Michael Moteau, aged twenty-seven.

In order to escape surveillance Kalb, on the 24th, instructed the skipper to take the *Victoire* out of port and to drop down the Gironde to Pauillac, whence on one tide they could put out to sea. They were all on board now, ready to sail, all except the Marquis, still waiting for the courier to come back from Paris with the consent of King and Duke and the blessing of everybody. Then he would dash back to Paris, bid them all good-bye, dash back to Bordeaux and at last be off. But no courier came. Kalb was growing impatient and ill-tempered—as much as he dared be with a marquis—and the other officers were raising their eyebrows now and then. And so, early on the morning of the 25th, he rode to Pauillac. Kalb was waiting, and just as they were stepping into the jolly-boat to go aboard the *Victoire* a courier arrived from Bordeaux bearing a letter for him. The Marquis opened it; it was from Coigny, and while the jolly-boat danced on the waves out to the ship, he read it—with a sinking of the heart. If he had expected to startle and amaze the world, he could have embarked on no better escapade. The secret was out and all over Paris; it had produced the finest kind of furore, a greater sensation than anything that had happened in a long time; the Duke d'Ayen was furious and using all his influence at Court not to have the expedition approved, but to have him arrested and brought back by order of the Crown. He was bitterly disappointed, and if they had not been already in the jolly he would have gone back (and in Kalb's opinion he would have done well), but he was too proud to do that now. He had never dreamt that

things would turn out in this way. After those assurances from the Count de Broglie, who must have had them from Vergennes himself, he had felt sure of the benevolent disposition of the Court; he had thought that when people talked as they had talked at Versailles, they meant it. He felt that in fitting out a ship of his own he was handsomely relieving the King and the government of any possible responsibility. He had persuaded himself that once his family saw him determined, once they knew that he had bought a ship, obtained a commission as major-general, and was actually on the point of embarking, they would give in, grant their consent, and that then he should hasten back to Paris to bid Adrienne and the rest good-bye. But now he awoke from this dream to find that he had been deceived by his own illusions. However, he climbed aboard, gave the order to drop down to Verdon, and the next day they put to sea, all on board dreadfully seasick as soon as they were well out in the Bay of Biscay. At noon, on the 28th, after a rough voyage, they anchored in Spanish waters, in the hidden Bay of Los Passajes, not far from San Sebastian.

As they lay in the sheltered little Bay of Los Passajes he talked it over with Kalb. The Baron was put out, a little disgusted by this second fiasco. The Baron, to do him justice, had always strongly disapproved of his keeping his wife in ignorance as he had done, and he was obliged to own that he had allowed Kalb to assume that he had the approval of his father-in-law. However, Kalb did "not think it his duty to advise him to defy his father-in-law and the King." On the contrary, Kalb thought it would better become him to submit and preserve the friendship of his family. The Baron, with the philosophy that can always be brought to bear upon another's losses, could comfort him by saying that he would be rid of it all for the money that it would

cost him; he was in a condition to stand that loss without troubling himself, and if any one said that he had committed a folly, his motives had been honourable and he could walk with his head up before "every right-thinking person."

Then another complication; the very next day a courier arrived at Los Passajes from Bordeaux bearing a *lettre de cachet* commanding the Marquis to make a *voyage d'exile* in Italy and Sicily, and to remain there for ten months. He was ordered to go to Toulon, there to await the arrival of the Duke d'Ayen and the Countess de Tessé, the Duke's sister, and then they were all to proceed to Italy.

A *lettre de cachet!* He was indignant. That his family should have gone to this extreme! His determination hardened. He was not going to turn ignominiously back now. But Kalb thought that they had better ride over to San Sebastian, have dinner at the excellent little café there and talk it over. They rode to San Sebastian. There, while at table, Kalb advised him to see Raimbaux & Co., the agents at Bordeaux, and to make a composition with them; he could cede everything to them for, say, twenty or thirty thousand *livres*. By that means he would get back some money in cash, say about twenty thousand, having paid down already forty thousand *livres*. If on the contrary he continued to assume the charge of everything, he would still have seventy-two thousand *livres* to pay.

But the Marquis had not the slightest intention of making any such composition; the money meant nothing to him, nor had he any intention just then of making the Italian tour with his father-in-law and his Aunt Tessé, charming and witty as she was, and fond of her as he had grown to be. The thought of the *lettre de cachet* rankled. He would go back to Bordeaux, see his uncle, send more couriers to

Paris and if necessary go there himself and bring round the Court of Louis XVI and the even more obdurate court of the house of Noailles.

He left the *Victoire* eating her head off in Los Passajes Bay, and Kalb on board, grumbling, and writing sad, sentimental letters to his wife—"he will never come back," he wrote her. "And thus he returns from the American war!" And he threatened, if the affair dragged on, to go to the Isle of Ré, there to wait for news from Deane. If they were going they ought to be off; as it was, they would arrive too late for the spring fighting.

The Marquis reached Bordeaux on April 3 and went to the house of his uncle, the Duke de Mouchy. But his uncle could do nothing for him; he, too, had had a courier from Paris; the Duke d'Ayen was in a rage, the whole family of Noailles in commotion; and what was almost as bad, the government was highly displeased. La Fayette at that moment was practically under arrest, and the best thing to do in order to get out of this very serious scrape was to give in gracefully and save his face by making that nice journey to Italy; in nine or ten months it would all blow over. Furthermore, the Marquis de Noailles, with a diplomatist's horror of "incidents," was in a terrible stew over the affair, fearing that his nephew had seriously compromised his mission at St. James's and ruined his career.

The Marquis showed a becoming penitence and allowed his uncle to assume that he would abandon the adventure; and the Duke wrote home that La Fayette had been most happily encountered at San Sebastian, had deferred to the orders of the King, returned to the realm and that the Ambassador in London need give himself no further uneasiness.

To the Marquis the idea of disobeying his sovereign was

abhorrent; it was against the tradition and instinct of his family and his caste; and then the thought of Adrienne was distressing. But he could not give in now. He wrote more letters and dispatched another courier to Paris. He sent word to Kalb to await his instructions, and after waiting for a week, wrote to Kalb that he was on the point of leaving for Marseilles, where on orders from the King he must report on the 15th. But he had not given up hope of winning over the Duke d'Ayen, and Kalb was not to hoist sail until he received a letter from Toulon. He wrote and dispatched this letter in the hope that, between Bordeaux and the Spanish frontier, it would be intercepted by the police, and lead them to think that he was about to proceed dutifully to Toulon to join his father-in-law and aunt in the Italian tour.

Then, to his amazement, Mauroy arrived at Bordeaux, the Viscount de Mauroy, the old friend and confidant of the Count de Broglie, who was to have sailed on the *Seine* as second to Kalb. He had been enrolled once more by Deane for service in America, and was to sail on the *Victoire*. Mauroy came straight from Broglie at Ruffec, bearing the most encouraging news; news that could not be entrusted to a letter. Mauroy could assure him, on the authority of Broglie, the friend of Vergennes, that it was only on the demand of the Duke d'Ayen that the order of the King had been issued, that, on being asked for their real opinion on the subject, the ministers had replied that, had it not been for the complaints of the Duke, they never would have mentioned the matter at all. In fact, every one at Paris applauded his heroism, and severely blamed the Duke.

The hesitations of the Marquis vanished; he wrote at once to the Count de Maurepas that, having received no answer

to his requests, he would assume the silence of the cabinet to be a tacit consent; he made a written declaration to Lieutenant-General de Fumel, commandant at Bordeaux, personally assuming the responsibility for his act, and decided to wait no longer.

He and Mauroy entered a post-chaise and took the road to Toulouse as though their destination were Marseilles; after following this road for a way, they made a detour, and at a post La Fayette procured the livery and jack-boots of a postilion, mounted a horse and galloped ahead of the post-chaise, across the sandy, barren Landes, through forests of pine, to Bayonne. They lay there that night, and the next morning early were off again, the Marquis still disguised as a courier, galloping ahead, over the road that wound along by the sea, through small Basque villages, meeting no one but smooth-shaven solemn Basque peasants in blue *bérets,* leading slow, patient yokes of fawn-coloured oxen. They could see the snowy Pyrenees now, and the bald peak of La Rune; through those mountains ran the Bidassao, and beyond that they were safe. They reached the little village of St. Jean de Luz, and while Mauroy was attending to the change of horses La Fayette flung himself down on a truss of straw in the stables of the inn, as he had seen couriers do. The daughter of the innkeeper, crossing the courtyard, looked in at the stable door, and in the courier lounging on the straw recognized the tall young Monsieur who had changed post-horses there a fortnight before on his way back to Bordeaux. She gave a sudden cry of surprise. The Marquis made her a sign; she clapped her hand over her mouth, hastily glanced back over her shoulder, just as a detachment of cavalry clattered up to the door of the inn; they made inquiries; had any one seen a tall young nobleman bound on some romantic adventure? The girl talked

with them a moment in her cunning Basque way; presently they cantered off.

When they were gone, the Marquis swung into the saddle, and dashed off at full gallop for the frontier, three leagues away. That afternoon he drew rein at Los Passajes. Kalb could hardly believe his eyes, but there was the Viscount de Mauroy, arriving in the post-chaise.

In two days the *Victoire* was ready for sea; the Marquis gave the order to weigh anchor and make sail, and they left the port of Los Passajes and put out into the Bay of Biscay. It was the evening of Sunday, April 20, 1777.

La Fayette told Captain Le Boursier to lay a course straight for the nearest point on the coast of North America, but the skipper hummed and hawed, began to temporize and raise objections; the ship's papers had been taken out for the West Indies, he must take a southerly course and bear towards the Windward Islands. Besides, on a direct course they were in greater danger of capture by English cruisers. But if they were in danger of English cruisers in northern waters, they were in danger of French cruisers in southern waters; a *lettre de cachet* was following him and would reach the Windward Islands long before their slow frigate. All French ships would have orders to arrest him. But Captain Le Boursier shook his stubborn head. The officers lingered a moment to see the outcome of the conflict. The Marquis stalked up to the skipper and reminded him sharply that he was the owner of the vessel.

"And if you do not obey," he added, "I will put you in irons and turn the command over to the first mate."

Captain Le Boursier looked into the eyes of the Marquis; then he confessed that he had smuggled on board eight thousand dollars' worth of goods to sell on his own account in the West Indies. The Marquis, with his lordly gesture,

waved this objection aside by saying that he would indemnify the skipper for any loss. Captain Le Boursier laid his course due west for the American coast.

The little company of gentlemen adventurers stood on the high poop of the small frigate and watched the cliffs along the shore recede. The Marquis was sad at heart, oppressed by the melancholy, the appalling loneliness of the sea at evening, and troubled by the thought of what he had done. He thought of Adrienne; she must know by now and be in tears. He thought of little Henriette, of his angry father-in-law, there in the *hôtel* de Noailles in the rue Saint-Honoré, and the *lettre de cachet*—he could not get over that. He thought of Noailles and Ségur and Poix, and of all those friends at the Epée de Bois. He thought of the King, of old Maurepas and Vergennes; should he be forgiven this rash, impulsive act? Was it worth it, after all, this coming away, embarking in a miserable ship, on a rough sea, for a voyage of two months? Only a few hours before he had been on European soil, and by now could have been driving back in his own comfortable coach to Paris . . . Paris! Were they all talking about him at Paris? Amazed at his heroism in going forth to combat England, and to add to the glory of France? . . . Was his name on every tongue? When he returned should he be welcomed as a hero? Perhaps he should be able to return sooner than he had expected. . . .

Old Kalb, in his cocked Swiss hat, his hair caked with powder, his little black pigtail sticking out behind, was leaning at the taffrail, his bronzed face turned towards the shore. What was he thinking of? Of the long years of war, of service in strange lands, under no flag of his own, of struggles to get on in the world ever since as a boy he had left the little town in Prussia? Was he thinking of that

other voyage to America which he had made for Choiseul ten years before? Of Broglie? Of his little house at Chaillot where his wife was sitting at that moment reading his letters? Of his little place in the country at Milon-la-Chapelle where he was going to settle down with his wife and children when he came back from this war in America? No one spoke; the little frigate, of scarcely three hundred tons' burden, was beginning to pitch. One by one the officers were going below. La Fayette thought that he had better turn in himself. And he left Kalb, standing at the rail, gazing at the fading shores.

CHAPTER II

THE AMERICAN WAR

1777-1781 *Aet.: 19-24*

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THE AMERICAN WAR

I

THE *Victoire* made heavy weather from the first, and the Argonauts were under hatches for days, too seasick for dreams of glory. When they could find their sea-legs and go on deck again, and stand forlornly at the rail and look out over that tossing waste of grey waters, it was to realize that they were in for a long voyage. The clumsy frigate could not sail fast in the most favourable wind, and it was their luck to beat against head winds all the way, or else to lie becalmed for days at a time. La Fayette had brought some books with him, and he tried to study English which he could practise now and then on old Kalb and on young Price, and the science or the art of war—a major-general ought to know something about the manual at least. But the sea made him melancholy, and he was lonely and homesick.

Their one excitement was in looking out for English cruisers. Whenever a sail appeared on the horizon, they would rush to the gunwale to see if it was not an enemy ship, for the English were always enemies, and now, with *lettres de cachet* on their way to the Windward Islands, French ships had become enemies as well. They had no arms except two poor cannons, and a few old muskets, and the *Victoire* was such a lumbering tub that anything on the seas could overhaul her. They decided that if attacked they would blow up the ship. Bedaulx, a brave Dutchman,

entered on the ship's list as a Swiss, contrived a way to do this.

The *Victoire* wallowed on, day after day, week after week. They had not seen a sail in a long while when, forty leagues from the coast of America, they sighted a ship, which they took to be an English cruiser, and Captain Le Boursier went white with fear. The Marquis prepared for defence; Kalb and Mauroy and the other officers went quietly to their posts; Bedaulx stood by, ready, when the moment came, to blow up the ship. The cruiser bore down on them and hailed and to the relief of every one proved to be an American. They tried to keep in her company, but the *Victoire* could not sail with her and fell astern, luckily, as the event proved, for no sooner had the American left La Fayette and his men behind, than she fell in with two English frigates that were cruising in those waters.

They were at the end of May, and began to feel the warm land breezes from the Carolinas; birds flew out to meet them; their long voyage was nearing its end. It was time; they had recklessly eaten up most of their provisions early in the voyage, and had been on short rations for weeks. They stood in cautiously for the shore, hoping to make the port of Charleston. And, fearful of the English frigates, the Marquis gave orders to show no lights at night.

They were all excited by the thought of sighting land, and began to write the long-postponed letters home.

The Marquis wrote to his wife:

On board "La Victoire,"
This 30th May, 1777

I write you from a great distance, my dear heart, and to this cruel distance I owe the still more terrible uncertainty as to the time when I can have news of you. However, I hope to have some soon. Among many other risks that make me wish to

arrive, none makes me so impatient as that one does. What fears, what troubles, I have to add to the sadness still so deep of separating myself from all I hold most dear! How will you have taken my second departure? Will you have loved me any the less for it? Will you pardon me? Will you remember that in any case it was necessary to be separated from you, wandering in Italy, and dragging out a life without glory in the midst of persons most opposed to my projects and to my way of thinking? All these reflections did not prevent me from feeling a frightful sensation in those terrible moments when the ship was taking me away from shore. Your regrets, those of my friends, Henriette—all presented itself to my mind in a heart-breaking manner. In that moment I could find no excuse for myself. If you only knew all that I have suffered, the sad days that I have passed in flying from everything that I loved in the world! Shall I have to add to this misfortune that of learning that you do not pardon me? In truth, my heart, I should be too much to pity. But I have not told you about myself, of my health, and I know that these details interest you. Since my last letter, I am in the most tiresome country; the sea is so sad, and we mutually sadden each other, I believe—the sea and I. I should have arrived already, but the winds have been cruelly contrary, and I cannot see myself before eight or ten days at Charleston. It is there that I count on debarking, and that will be a great pleasure for me. Once arrived, I shall have every day the hope of receiving news from France. I shall learn so many interesting things about what I am going to find, and above all, about what I have left behind with so much regret. If I can only learn that you are well, that you love me still, and that the same may be said of a certain number of friends, I shall be perfectly philosophical about the rest, of whatever sort and of whatever country it may be, but if my heart were attacked in a sensitive spot, if you were to love me no more, I should be too unhappy. I need not fear that, need I, my dear heart? I was very sick during the first days of my voyage, but I could give myself the consolation of the wicked which is to suffer in company. I treated myself in my own way and was cured sooner than the others, and now I am about the same as on land. Once arrived, I am certain to have the assur-

ance of perfect health for a very long time. Now do not go and believe that I am running any real danger in the occupation that I am to have. The post of a general officer has always been regarded as a patent of immortality. It is a service so different to that which I should have had in France as Colonel, for example; in that grade one has only to give counsel. Ask any of the French officers, of which the number is so great, and they will tell you that once they have reached that rank they do not run any more risk and, in consequence, do not give place to others as in other services. The proof that I do not wish to deceive you is that I admit that, just now, we are running some danger, for we are in risk of being attacked by English vessels, and mine is not strong enough to defend herself, but once on land, I shall be in perfect security. You see that I tell you everything, my dear heart, so have confidence and do not be anxious without cause. I shall not write you a journal of my voyage. Here the days follow one another, and what is worse, resemble one another. Always the sky, always the water, and then tomorrow the same thing. In truth, those people who write volumes on a sea voyage must be pitiless tattlers; for myself, I have had head winds, as others have; I have had a very long voyage, as others have; I have had storms, seen vessels, and it has been much more interesting for me than for any one else. But I have seen nothing that was worth the trouble of writing about, or which would not have been written by everybody else. Just now, let us talk about more important things; let us talk about you; about dear Henriette; of her brother or of her sister. Henriette is so sweet that she makes one wish for a daughter. Whatever our new child may be, I shall receive it with a lively joy. Do not lose a moment to hasten my happiness in telling me of its birth. I do not know if it is because I am twice a father, but I feel more of a father than ever. Monsieur Deane, and my friend Carmichael, will furnish you the means of sending letters. I am quite sure they will neglect nothing to make me happy as soon as possible. Write, or even send a trustworthy man. It would give me so much pleasure to question a man who had seen you. Landrin . . . for example. . . . At any rate, whatever you think right. You do not know how strong, how tender,

my feelings are for you; if you think the smallest thing that concerns you does not interest me. This time, my news will reach you much later, but as soon as I am settled you will have fresh news often. There is not a great difference between letters from America and letters from Sicily. I confess to you that I take that affair of Sicily very much to heart. I thought that I was going to see you again so soon! But let us drop the subject of Sicily. Adieu, my dear heart. I will write you from Charleston; I will write before arriving there; good-night for to-day.

A week later he wrote again:

This 7th June

I am still in this sad waste and without comparison that is the most tiresome thing in the world. To console myself a little I think of you, of my friends; I think of the pleasure of seeing you again; what a charming moment it will be when I arrive, when I embrace you, the first thing, without being expected. You will be, maybe, with your children. Even to think of that happy moment gives me a delicious pleasure. Do not think that it can be far off. To me it will appear very long certainly, but in fact will not be so long as you imagine. Without being able either to fix the day or the month, without seeing for myself the state of things, the exile prescribed until the month of January by Monsieur le Duc d'Ayen appeared to me so long that certainly I should not fix one so long for myself. You must admit, my heart, that the occupation and the life that I am going to have are very different from those that they arranged for me on that futile journey. Defender of that liberty which I idolize, coming of my own free will as a friend to offer my services to that most interesting Republic, I bring my sincerity and my good will; no ambition, no selfish interests. In striving for my glory, I strive for their happiness. I hope that in my favour you will become a good American. It is a sentiment made for all virtuous hearts; the happiness of America is intimately bound up with the happiness of humanity. She is going to become a cherished and safe asylum of virtue, of tolerance, of equality and of a peaceful liberty. . . .

You know that the Viscount [de Noailles] is always saying that travel forms young men; if he only said it once every morning, and once every evening, really that would not be too much, because I realize more and more the justice of that remark. I do not know where he is now, the poor Viscount, any more than the Prince [de Poix], any more than all my friends. This ignorance is nevertheless a cruel thing. Whenever in some corner you happen upon some one whom I love, give him a thousand and ten thousand messages from me. Embrace my dear sisters very tenderly, tell them to think of me and to love me; give my best compliments to Mademoiselle Marin [governess of the young ladies in the Noailles family]. I recommend also to you poor Abbé Fayon. As for Monsieur the Marshal de Noailles tell him that I do not write to him for fear of annoying him, and because I have nothing to tell him except my arrival; that I await his commissions for trees or plants, or whatever he desires of me, and that I should very much like that promptness to be a proof of my sentiments for him. Present also my homage to Madame the Duchess de la Trémoïlle, and tell her that I make her the same offer as to Monsieur the Marshal de Noailles, for her or for her daughter-in-law, who has a very beautiful garden. Also tell my old friend Desplaces [his valet] that I am in good health. As for my aunts, Madame d'Ayen and the Viscountess, I shall write to them.

Here are my little commissions, my dear heart; I have also written to Sicily. [Where the Duke d'Ayen and the Countess de Tessé had gone on the famous tour.] . . . We see to-day several kinds of birds which tell us that we are not very far from land. The hope of arriving there is very sweet, because life in this place is very tiresome. Happily my good health permits me to occupy myself a little. I divide my time between my military books and my English books. I have made some progress in that language which is going to be so necessary to me. Adieu, I am not able to continue because night is coming on, and for these last few days I have forbidden all lights on my ship. You see how prudent I am. Adieu, then. If my fingers are guided a little by my heart I do not need to see clearly to tell you that I love you, that I shall love you all my life.

II

They had hoped to land at Charleston, but the wind was against them, and fearing that the English frigates would take them if they remained longer at sea, they stood in for the shore, and at last, on Friday, June 13, 1777, at half-past two in the afternoon, after a voyage lasting fifty-four days, they dropped anchor in a bay. They did not know where they were, and as soon as the anchor was down they lowered the jolly-boat, and the Marquis, Kalb, Price and the first mate were rowed ashore. When they reached land the Marquis's first act was to swear that he would vanquish, or perish, with the American cause.

Old Kalb, however, thought that they had better find out first where they were and hunt up a pilot. They rowed up the lonely, silent river, in the suffocating heat of the summer afternoon that lay on them like a blanket; they saw no sign of habitation along the low-lying, lush banks, but towards evening they came upon four negroes, fishing for oysters from a dug-out canoe. It was difficult for them to understand the negroes, but from the confused conversation Kalb and Price learned that they were in North Inlet in the bay of Georgetown at the mouth of the Great Pedee River. The negroes were slaves belonging to a planter who lived farther up the river, and agreed to conduct them to the head of North Island where, they thought, a pilot lived. The negroes said that the English prowled at times about that part of the country and that only a week before had seized some fishermen. They rowed up the river in the sultry heat of a hothouse, hardly to be borne by Europeans; the sailors laboured at their heavy oars for seven hours, until, at ten o'clock that night, the jolly grounded at low tide. They decided to leave the jolly with the first officer

and the sailors, whilst the Marquis, Kalb and Price got into the dug-out and were rowed on by the negroes until midnight.

At last they saw a light, and the negroes said it was in the house of their master. They landed; dogs began to bark and out of the darkness a voice called to them to halt; who were they and what did they want? Kalb explained, and they were told to come on. Before them, pale in the moonlight, rose the white columns of a stately Georgian country-house; they mounted the steps, and in the wide hall were welcomed by Major Benjamin Huger to Prospect Hill.

A table was laid for them in the panelled dining-room, and after they had supped they were shown to upper rooms for the night. And now, after all those miserable weeks in the fusty cabin of a merchant vessel, safe on American shores at last, La Fayette turned in between cool linen sheets once more and fell sound asleep.

When he awoke he looked out on a June morning in Carolina; the world had never seemed so lovely; wide-spreading live oaks, tall magnolias, a terraced garden, and beyond, low green rice fields. The air was full of delicious scents, and everything about him had the charm of novelty —the lofty chamber in which he had slept so soundly; the mosquito curtains with which his bed was hung; the black slaves who came to serve his breakfast and to receive his orders.

With the incoming tide that Saturday morning, the yawl had come up the river, and the Marquis and Kalb returned on board the *Victoire*. They had satisfied themselves that she drew too much water to come up the bay, and the Marquis ordered Le Boursier to sail by the first favourable wind for Charleston, and gave the officers the choice of

accompanying him and Kalb to that city by land, or of going on with the ship to meet him there. The Viscount de Mauroy and several of the others elected to risk capture by the English cruisers, and put to sea once more in the *Victoire;* the Marquis, Kalb, the Chevalier du Buysson, four other officers and their servants were set on shore again and returned to Prospect Hill.

Major Huger could provide only three mounts, so that the Marquis took but one valet when he and the Baron set out on Sunday evening for Charleston, fifty miles away to the south, leaving du Buysson and the others to follow as best they could on foot. The Marquis and Kalb arrived at Charleston on Tuesday, worn out with the heat and fatigue.

Those who had set out on foot arrived at Charleston three days later, looking like ragged brigands. They had abandoned their luggage, preferring "to carry arms, rather than clean linen, in order to defend ourselves against the negroes." The heat had been unbearable; they had been eaten up by mosquitoes, and unable to walk in their military boots had thrown them away, and trudged on in bare feet, over burning sands and through tangled woods. For two weeks afterwards du Buysson's legs were swollen as large as his thighs.

The sorry band was hooted in the streets and jeered at as adventurers, even by the French. For Charleston just then swarmed with Frenchmen, broken officers riddled with debt, the rubbish of the islands, to whom, in order to purge their colonies of the rogues and rascals constantly arriving from France, governors of French colonies in the West Indies had gladly given letters recommending them to the "Anglo-American generals." The first of them had been well received, but they grew to be so numerous and so importunate, and their conduct became so scandalous

and notorious that no one had faith any more in letters of recommendation. Frenchmen, du Buysson observed, were detested in all that country and were "very poorly paid for their sacrifices on behalf of a people who give them little thanks—and they do not deserve much."

The *Victoire* had not arrived, and La Fayette was anxious. Every one assured him that the ship could not possibly elude the two English frigates blockading the port. But, as he called on all to witness, his star held, and the next day the *Victoire* came triumphantly into port. Public opinion promptly veered in favour of his followers. They were cordially received, and the French adventurers who had been the first to scoff at them now came fawning in crowds and basely paid court to the Marquis, seeking his favour and protection, and trying to attach themselves to him. They would have had small difficulty in imposing on his confiding kindness in other circumstances, but they were responsible for the detestation in which Charleston held the French, and that touched the Marquis in his sensitive pride. This unfortunate prejudice, however, was not shared by the upper classes in that nascent democracy, and as soon as they learnt that a marquis, scion of one of the oldest families in the French nobility, had come over in his own ship, bringing with him this large staff, many of them bearing noble titles, they welcomed them with southern hospitality and arranged a programme of fêtes that filled a whole week. No greater honours could have been shown to a Marshal of France than were paid to the young Marquis; a grand banquet was given in his honour; General Howe and General Moultrie of the Continental army were present. They drank to the King and Queen of France, to the glorious French army, to the Marquis, to Kalb, to the whole band that had come in the *Victoire;* they drank to the President

of the Congress and to the Congress itself, to Washington and the generals, to the Continental army, to the cause of American Independence, to liberty in general, to everything and everybody. It went on for hours. The Marquis ventured to propose a toast in English, and his few words, spoken with his French accent, quite captivated the Charlestonians, and they cheered him. He charmed everybody by his gracious manner, his frankness and enthusiasm, and was himself delighted with everything. It was his first taste of the sweets of popularity. He returned his visits, and the next day the generals commanding in Charleston took them all to see the city and its suburbs and showed them the fort, six miles from the city, where there was another dinner and more toasts. It was a curious fort, with a revetment inside and out, made of the trunks of palm-trees. When English men-o'-war fired on it, the cannon balls harmlessly embedded themselves in the spongy palms, so that the more the English bombarded it the stronger it became. The Chevalier du Buysson sent a plan of the fort to the Count de Broglie.

No wonder that the Marquis, sitting up that night to write letters to his wife and friends at home, to be sent by a French ship that was sailing in the morning, could wax enthusiastic, not only over Charleston, but over all America, in spite of the fact that the hour was late, the heat frightful and that he was being devoured by mosquitoes that "cover you with great blisters." He had been there only three days and had discovered Paradise.

I am now going to speak of the country, my dear heart, and of its inhabitants. They are as kind as my enthusiasm has been able to represent them; the simplicity of manners, the desire to please, the love of country and of liberty, the delightful equality that reigns everywhere here; the richest man and the poorest are

on a level, and while there are many fortunes in the country, I will defy anybody to find the least difference between their respective manners one for the other. I began with country life at the home of Major Huger. At present, here I am in the city; everything here recalls more or less the English customs, except that there is more simplicity than in England. The city of Charleston is one of the handsomest and best built that I have ever seen and has the most agreeable population. The American women are very pretty, very simple, and charming in the neatness that prevails everywhere here; they pay great attention to neatness, even more than in England. What enchants me here is that all the citizens are brothers. In America there are no poor people, not even what may be called peasants. Every citizen has his own property and all have the same rights as the wealthiest landowner in the country. The inns are very different to those in Europe. The host and hostess sit down at table with you, and do the honours of a good repast, and on going away you pay without haggling over your bill. If you do not wish to go to an inn, there are country houses where it is sufficient to be a good American to be received with all the attention that in Europe one would have for a friend. As for myself personally, I have received from everybody the most agreeable reception possible; it is enough that one should have come with me to be welcomed in the most satisfactory manner. . . . To judge by the pleasant existence that I lead in this country, the sympathy that puts me as much at ease with the inhabitants as if I had known them for twenty years, the resemblance in their ways of thinking to my own, my love for glory and for liberty, one ought to believe that I am very happy, but I miss you, my dear heart; I miss my friends, and there is no happiness for me far from you and them. I ask you if you always love me, but I ask it much oftener of myself, and my heart always repeats yes. I hope that it does not deceive me. I await news of you with inexpressible impatience and hope to find some letters at Philadelphia; my chief fear is that the corsair which is going to bring them to me may be captured on the voyage. While I imagine that I have greatly displeased the English because, despite them, I took the liberty of leaving in order

to beard them, I vow that I shall not have finished with them if they take the vessel; my dearest hope on which I am counting so much is to receive your letters. Write often, please, and at length. You do not know how much joy I shall have in hearing from you. Kiss Henriette; may I say, my heart, to kiss our children? Those poor children have a father who is far afield, but at bottom he is a good and honest fellow, a good father who loves his family well, and a good husband too, because he loves his wife with all his heart. Make my compliments to your friends as well as to mine; with the permission of the Countess Auguste and Madame de Fronsac. What I mean by my friends you will know—our dear society, formerly the society of the Court, which by the lapse of time has become the society of the *Épée de Bois*. We republicans find that it is worth more than the others. This letter will be given to you by a French captain who, I believe, is going to deliver it to you himself, but I confess to you that I am preparing a good thing for to-morrow; it is to write you by an American who is leaving also, but later. Adieu then, my dear heart. I finish because I have no more paper and no more time, and if I do not repeat ten thousand times that I love you, it is not because I have no more sentiments, but truly because of modesty. I confidently hope that I have persuaded you of it. It is very late at night, the heat is frightful, and I am devoured by small gnats which cover one with great blisters, but the best countries have, as you see, their inconveniences. Adieu, my heart, adieu!

The Marquis thought that a day or two would be long enough for them to make, or for Kalb to make for them, preparations for their journey to Philadelphia; all they had to do was to get horses and carriages, pay their parting calls, and set out. To be sure, there was the *Victoire,* and her cargo, which was to be sold to provide the money necessary for the expedition. But when they went to attend to this detail, Captain Le Boursier coolly presented a note for forty thousand *livres,* and an agreement that the Marquis, in his reckless way, had signed in the hurry of departure

from Bordeaux. By the terms of the note and agreement the vessel and its cargo were to return to Bordeaux to be sold, and out of the proceeds of the sale the note for forty thousand *livres*—representing the unpaid balance of the purchase money—was to be paid, plus an additional amount of thirty-five per cent—twenty-five per cent for insurance and ten per cent commission. He had magnificently promised to provide for everybody in the party—and here they were, with no money, no hope of any from the sale of the cargo, and a journey of eight hundred and fifty miles through a wilderness, before they could reach Philadelphia and join the army. When the Marquis came to negotiate a loan, he found that there were in America, after all, certain shades of difference between rich and poor, brothers though they might be, and it was with great difficulty that he succeeded in raising seven thousand dollars on his note of hand, with which Kalb bought horses and carriages. The *Victoire* sailed away for Bordeaux, but in going out of Charleston Harbour went aground on the bar and was lost. And that was the end of the Argosy.

III

The company divided into three sections for the journey to Philadelphia. Three of the officers preferred to risk capture by the English and to go by sea; the others went overland. Capitaine, having fallen ill, had to be left behind at Charleston.

On the morning of June 25, the first contingent drew out of Charleston in an imposing procession, amidst the applause of the populace. The column was headed by one of the Marquis's valets, dressed in the uniform of a hussar, and mounted on a horse. After him came a large open

barouche in which sat the Marquis, with the Baron de Kalb on his left. Beside the barouche, rode the Marquis's other servant, acting as his squire. After a sufficient interval came a gig, with the Viscount de Mauroy and Colonel de Valfort. The third carriage was assigned to the aides-de-camp, the Chevalier du Buysson and Major de Gimat. Then came a wagon with the baggage, and a negro on horseback bringing up the rear.

None of them had the slightest knowledge of the country. Over wretched corduroy roads that led through swamps, or by mere wagon trails cut through the forests, they toiled on in the stifling heat. In four days the carriages were in splinters, and they proceeded on horseback. But the horses were old and broken-winded; they went lame, and several of the poor things died. They bought others on the way, and when these gave out they trudged along on foot. Unable to provide transport for their baggage, they were forced to abandon part of it; the rest was stolen. They were tortured by mosquitoes and flies; by day they were broiled by the insufferable heat, and by night, sleeping in the woods, they shivered with the cold; they went for days without food; several of them had fever and dysentery. The old campaigners in the party had never known such hardships; du Buysson said that in Europe the suffering was never continuous; there, it was compensated by many pleasures, whilst here their troubles grew worse each day with no alleviation whatever. But they kept up their spirits by thinking of the brilliant reception awaiting them at Philadelphia. They were even gay. La Fayette's zeal alone was sufficient to inspire the whole company. To him, at nineteen, it was a splendid and incomparable adventure; if he was suffering, it was for liberty; if the road was rough, it was the way to glory. Finally, on July 17, they reached Petersburg, where

they left Gimat ill of a fever, and at last, on the morning of the 27th, they dragged wearily into Philadelphia, with hardly a shirt to their backs, having been thirty-two days on the road.

They made themselves as presentable as they could, went at once to call on the President of the Congress, and sent in to him their letters of recommendation and their contract with Silas Deane. They waited—in the street—and after a while a member of Congress, *"le Sieur Moose,"* du Buysson called him, came out and told them to come back in the morning. The next day they were early at the door of Congress and were kept waiting a long time. At last Sieur Moose appeared, accompanied by another member, *le Sieur Lowel,* and bluntly said to them:

"This gentleman speaks French very well, and it is his business to get rid of everybody belonging to your nation. Hereafter you will have to deal with him."

With this Sieur Moose returned to the halls of Congress, leaving them to the mercy of James Lovell, a churlish member from Massachusetts and chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Without asking the Marquis and his companions to enter, Lovell harangued them there in the street, telling them that they were nothing but a lot of impostors and adventurers. "We ordered Mr. Deane to send us four French engineers. Instead he sent us Coudray with some men who pretended to be engineers but were not. We ordered Mr. Franklin to send us four engineers. They have arrived. French officers have a habit of coming to serve us without being asked. Last year, it is true, we needed officers, but this year we have a great many of them, and all experienced."

And with this Lovell abruptly turned and left them standing there in the street.

The forlorn little company looked at one another stupefied. That men of their rank, Frenchmen, officers and gentlemen, with a noble La Fayette and member of the family of Noailles at their head, come all this way, and with such credentials and introductions, a formal engagement signed by the official representative of the Congress, should be received as common adventurers and insulted in this way was too much. They were furious. But old Kalb restrained them. Something that Lovell had said had fallen significantly on his ears; he recalled those cold, rainy December days in the port of Havre; the *Seine* and the *Amphitrite;* one word, a name, had brought it all back and furnished the key—du Coudray.

For du Coudray was in America. He had made so much trouble at Havre for Beaumarchais, and at Paris for the ministers, that he had been ordered to rejoin his regiment at Metz, but, whilst pretending to obey, he had slipped away to Nantes and had secretly got aboard a ship with an Irishman named Conway. Once in Philadelphia he had put on the lordliest airs, represented himself to be a French nobleman, a brigadier-general in the King's army, the confidential adviser of the King's ministers and personal friend of all the princes and dukes in the realm; he wrote to Congress that the material aid sent by France was due entirely to his influence and solicitation. And he delivered the agreement signed by the complaisant Silas Deane promising him a commission as major-general with command of the artillery and corps of engineers, thirty-six thousands francs' pay, and three hundred thousand francs' subsidy after the war.

He was not, of course, a nobleman, but the son of a wine-merchant at Rennes—which, in spite of the Declaration of Independence, was not quite the same thing; he was not a

brigadier-general in the French army, but merely a *chef de brigade*. However, he had pulled the wool over the eyes of certain members of Congress, and had warned them against La Fayette and Kalb as imposters and adventurers. He even wrote an insulting letter to La Fayette. The officers who had come out with du Coudray were swaggering arrogantly about, pretentious and dissatisfied, criticizing everything, sneering and laughing satirically at the Americans and their army. The city swarmed with French adventurers from the West Indies; they buttonholed members of Congress at every turn; some kept gambling dens, some proved to be spies for the English; others, who had failed to obtain places were returning to France to void their spleen and disappointment in abuse of the Americans and ridicule of their cause. French officers, indeed, were not popular at Philadelphia just then, except La Radière, Gouvion, Laumoy and du Portail, the four engineers sent out by Franklin.

Whilst Kalb and Mauroy, resenting the treatment they had received, were deciding upon a course to pursue, the Marquis, acting on one of those impulses that sometimes served him, dashed off a letter and, without showing it to any of his companions, sent it to the President of Congress:

"After the sacrifices that I have made, I have the right to demand two favours; one is to serve at my own expense; the other to begin my service as a volunteer."

A new tone, this, from a French officer; John Hancock read their letters, and then Lovell, who had received them so uncivilly, came to see him, accompanied by "another member more polite and more adroit." They made some clumsy excuse, and the second member drew La Fayette aside for a private interview in which he promised him everything. They went away and later on the polite mem-

ber came back and, at a second conference, offered the Marquis, on behalf of the Congress, a commission as major-general in the Continental army, his rank to date from that day only; but the agreement signed by Silas Deane must be annulled, and he must serve without pay and without command. The Marquis did not catch the name of the member, but he was smooth and plausible, and intimated that the arrangement he proposed was merely the entering wedge, and that the little question of command would be settled to the Marquis's satisfaction in due time. The member's political technique was so sound, he was so polite and reassuring that the eager and confiding young Marquis acceded to his terms, feeling, wisely enough, that while it was much less than Silas Deane had covenanted for, and much less than he himself expected and desired, the first step was to get a commission; the command would come in its time; as for pay, he had a rich young nobleman's contempt for that. And that very day, July 31, 1777, Congress adopted this generous resolution:

> Whereas the Marquis de La Fayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connexions, and at his own expense come over to offer his services to the United States without pension or particular allowance, and is anxious to risque his life in our cause—
>
> Resolved, that his service be accepted, and that in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family and connexions he have rank and commission of major-general in the Army of the United States.

Two hours afterwards he received a copy of the resolution and the scarf of a major-general.

The next day he saw Washington. The British fleet, under Admiral Lord Howe, had appeared off the Delaware capes, and the General had moved his army into Penn-

sylvania and himself come on to Philadelphia. A dinner was given to the Commander-in-Chief, and the Marquis was invited. He went, in greater excitement than he had ever felt in appearing at the Court of Versailles; he entered the parlour, crowded with officers, members of Congress, politicians and eminent citizens, perspiring in the heat of the August afternoon, glanced swiftly about and there, at the other end of the room, was Washington. There could be no mistake; he picked him out at once, with the greatest ease, by "the majesty of his countenance and his tall form." Washington wore the blue and buff uniform of the Continental army; his hair, white with powder, was dressed in the European way; he was speaking gravely to those who pressed about him, calm, master of himself—and of them. He had a serene and affable expression and there was a certain nobility in his face—the reddish face of a man who lived on horseback, out of doors, in all weathers, riding to hounds, when he was not fighting battles, a kind of English squire, with all the virtues and many of the prejudices of an English squire, including a contemptuous dislike of everything French. There he stood, the cautious, patient, strong-willed, unpretentious dictator of this democracy about which he never had any illusions.

The Marquis gazed a moment, and then made his way towards him through the crowd. The charm of his youth, the prestige of his name and rank, the light of his romantic adventure already shone about him; men whispered: "The Marquis!" and fell back, and he stood before Washington. He was presented, and something of the timidity that used to overwhelm him at Court assailed him now, but when Washington received him with a "noble and affable welcome" he was at once and wholly at his ease. La Fayette was not yet twenty; Washington was forty-nine, but there

was an instant understanding between them, the beginning of one of those rare and perfect friendships that last for life. There was no chance to talk just then; the Marquis could do no more than speak a few words in his halting English, before they moved out to the dining-room where the great table was laid. All through the long meal, served in the English fashion, with the interminable series of rhetorical toasts, lasting until the candles were borne in, he could hardly take his eyes off Washington. When at length the dinner was over and they were back again in the parlour, the General, as he was about to retire, drew the Marquis aside, and talked to him for a while. He complimented him on the spirit he had shown and the sacrifices he had made for the American cause, told him he must treat the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief as his home, and that he should look upon him as one of his own "family"—as in the English fashion he called his staff.

"I cannot promise you the luxuries of a Court," the General added with a smile, "or even the conveniences that your mode of life makes you familiar with, but, as an American soldier, you will doubtless strive to accommodate yourself somehow to your new character and submit with grace to the customs and privations of a republican army."

The General invited the Marquis to accompany him on a tour of inspection of the fortifications along the Delaware, and to witness a review of the troops. The next day a carriage drawn by four horses was sent to fetch him, and after the tour of the forts they drove to camp, about five miles north of Philadelphia, between Germantown and the Schuylkill River. And there, on the hot, dusty plain, the Marquis saw the American army—eleven thousand ragged, dishevelled men, looking like zanies, no two dressed alike and most of them hardly dressed at all. The luckiest of

them wore common hunting-shirts, loose, ill-fitting jackets made of grey linsey-woolsey, like those that La Fayette had seen worn in the backwoods on his way from Charleston. The men were miserably armed, and as for tactics, well, it was pitiable.

Washington, perhaps reading the surprise and disappointment in the Marquis's face, remarked:

"We are rather embarrassed to show ourselves to an officer who has just left the army of France."

"I am here, Sir," the Marquis quickly replied, "to learn and not to teach."

Washington thanked him. It was an unfamiliar tone for French officers to adopt. Others had not been so modest —du Coudray, for instance, and Conway.

IV

Whilst La Fayette was dining with Washington and flourishing about as a major-general at reviews, his old shipmates of the *Victoire,* waiting in cheap lodgings for Congress to take some notice of them, were looking on at his glory, mortified and chagrined, and a little bitter. "They dazzled him so," wrote du Buysson, "that he forgot us for a moment. But I do him justice. He has too good a heart for that forgetfulness to last long."

When some of them reproached him for not having made common cause with them, the Marquis declared that he would send back his ribbon to Congress, and return to France with them. But Kalb, though wounded in his pride, and deeply humiliated, shook his old head.

"After leaving France with so much éclat," he argued, "you must distinguish yourself now."

In a kind of contrition the Marquis did all he could to

induce the Congress to accept his companions; he appealed to Washington, but with no result.

He had not yet officially accepted his commission, and he was tortured by indecision, unable to make up his mind. But he could not bear to turn back now, and at last, with his own hand, in the English that was literally translated from the French in which he thought, he wrote to John Hancock:

the 13 august 1777

Sir

I beg that you will receive yourself and present to Congress my thanks for the Commission of Major General in the Army of the United States of America which I have been honor'd with in their name the feelings of my heart, long before it became my duty, engaged me in the love of the American cause I not only consider'd it as the cause of Honor, Virtue, and universal Happiness, but felt myself empressed with the warmest affection for a Nation who exhibited by their resistence so fine an exemple of Justice and Courage to the Universe

I schall neglect nothing on my part to justify the confidence which the Congress of the United States has been pleased to repose in me as my highest ambition has ever been to do every thing only for the best of the cause in which I am engaged, I wish to serve near the person of General Washington till such time as he may think proper to entrust me with a division of the Army.

It is now as an american that I'l mention every day to congress the officers who came over with me, whose interests are for me as my own, and the consideration which they deserve by their merits their ranks, their state and reputation in france.

I am sir with the sentiments which every good american owe to you

Your most obedient
servant the mqis de LaFayette

to
the Honorable M Hancok
president of Congress
Philadelphia.

He did his best to help his companions and succeeded in obtaining commissions for Gimat and La Colombe as aides-de-camp to him. He secured the promise of a commission for Capitaine, and had hopes of placing Vrigny in the cavalry.

He spent the next fortnight getting uniforms and kit and in teasing Washington to give him a command. Washington, much as he liked La Fayette, was rather annoyed; for after all the Marquis was only nineteen and had no military experience. He wrote to Benjamin Harrison to say that the Marquis's understanding of the arrangement was wholly different to that of Congress.

> What the designs of Congress respecting this gentleman were, and what line of conduct I am to pursue to comply with their design and his expectations, I know not, and beg to be instructed. If Congress meant that his rank should be unaccompanied by command, I wish it had been sufficiently explained to him. If, on the other hand, it was intended to invest him with all the powers of a major-general, why have I been led into a contrary belief, and left in the dark with respect to my own conduct towards him? . . . Let me beseech you, my good Sir, to give me the sentiments of Congress on this matter, that I may endeavour, as far as it is in my power, to comply with them.

But Harrison was something of a politician himself and replied that the General was to follow his own judgment and discretion.

V

On August 20, 1777, he joined the army in camp on the Old York road near Neshaminy Creek in Bucks County, and became a member of the General's family. The next day he sat, with becoming silence, in his first council of

war, called to discuss the movements of Howe's fleet. It was agreed that it had gone to Charleston, and the day following an express arrived from Maryland with the news that it was lying at anchor in Chesapeake Bay—two hundred sail. And so Washington marched down the Old York road and went into camp near Germantown, fixing his headquarters at Stenton, the seat of the Logan family.

At Philadelphia the Whigs were disheartened; Congress was nervous, and to buoy up their spirits and overawe the Tories Washington decided to parade his troops through the city. "The army is to march in one column through the city of Philadelphia," said the general order issued from Stenton. "The drums and fifes of each brigade are to be collected in the centre of it, and a tune for the quick-step played, but with such moderation that the men may step to it with ease, and without *dancing* along, or totally disregarding the music, as has been too often the case."

The next day, Sunday, August 24, the army, those eleven thousand ragged, ill-shod men, marched out of camp, made a short halt outside the city to dress their column and entered Philadelphia. The men had done the pathetic little they could to smarten their appearance; they made the best of their linsey-woolsey shirts, tucked in their rags and each man thrust a sprig of green in his hat, if he had a hat, and if he had not, he improvised one of green leaves. To the gay old English tunes shrilled by the fifes, and to the throb and roll of the drums, they marched down Front Street and up Chestnut, past Carpenter's Hall, where Congress sat; the members came out to see them pass. Washington rode at their head, and the Marquis, in his new uniform, rode by his side. Behind them cantered the staff—young Alexander Hamilton among them—and Gimat and La Colombe. The population of Philadelphia, reduced to

less than half its number by the flight of frightened citizens, turned out to see the army; they lined the streets, clustered around the door-steps of red brick houses, looked out of upper windows—the Tories with satirical and contemptuous, the Quakers with pained and disapproving, expressions. But the curiosity of the people to see "the Marquis," broke out in cheers as they recognized the tall, romantic youth riding at the side of Washington.

If only Noailles and Ségur could see him now! He looked at Washington, sitting his horse; he, too, had a new uniform, with a most impressive buff waistcoat, and the Marquis thought him more august and handsome than ever. He turned in his saddle and glanced back over the undulating column with its sprigs of green for martial plumes; they were not much like the Black Musketeers, or the regiment of Noailles. And yet, even in their rags, he thought that they presented a creditable appearance as they swung along at the quickstep, shuffling up the dust, to the wild music of the fifes. But the Marquis saw everything *couleur de rose.*

The calm of the groves about Stenton was broken now by the fever of preparation; every one was excited except Washington; he was even graver than usual. Aides-de-camp and orderlies were dashing about; news had come; the British fleet had landed eighteen thousand veteran troops at the Head of Elk, in Maryland. They were only fifty miles away and marching on Philadelphia.

Then, on September 3, there were reports of skirmishes between the heads of British columns and advance posts of Americans. They moved forward; by the 9th, Washington's main body was at the village of Newport, in Delaware; Howe advanced in force as if to attack and Washington fell back, and, toward evening, crossed the

Brandywine, the waters of which were low at that season, and that night occupied the hilly ground on the east bank of the Brandywine, commanding Chad's Ford. The army was drawn up along the stream, the right, commanded by General Sullivan, extended to the north; the left, under General Merkins, was protected by thick woods to the south; the centre, holding the ford, was commanded by General Anthony Wayne; Greene's division was held in reserve, under the eye of Washington. An advance post of Light Infantry under General Maxwell would defend the approaches to the ford; the Marquis wished that he might command it, be the first to oppose the *Anglais!* Washington's headquarters were at the house of Benjamin Ring, a mile east of the ford. The Marquis slept, or lay awake, that night at the house of Gideon Gilpin, a mile farther east on the same road, and thinking of the morrow's battle, the first he had ever seen, he had a queer presentiment that he should be wounded. At daylight he was up and in the saddle, and while waiting for the attack, he rode along the lines with General Washington, who was very calm and very silent. The men cheered as the Commander-in-Chief passed by, gravely returning the salutes.

Shortly after daylight, away on the other side of the Brandywine, the British Guards and Grenadiers, with a force of Hessians and Anspachers, were in motion. Presently he could hear the skirmishing between the outposts; the Americans fell back; the enemy opened fire with artillery, as though to cross Chad's Ford. The Marquis, by Washington's side, sat on his horse and through his glasses watched the fighting at the ford. The hot September sun rose higher. There were clouds of dust along the Great Valley road that led to Trimble's Ford and Jeffrie's Ford, higher up the stream. It was nearly midday; aides were

galloping in with conflicting reports: Cornwallis was moving northward; Cornwallis's movement toward the north was only a feint; the Guards were returning to join Knyphausen at the ford. Washington was uncertain, and waited.

Then, suddenly, an old gentleman galloped up on a light-footed hackney mare; he had on no coat or stockings, and introduced himself as Thomas Cheney—Squire Cheney, they called him in the neighbourhood—but withal a plain, blunt farmer, and, as he assured His Excellency, a good staunch Whig. Hearing the firing that morning he had thrown the saddle on his mare and galloped off toward Birmingham without dressing himself. He knew the country well and had ridden about the hills until he saw the main body of the enemy, marching up on the west side of the river. But there was still time; they could not cross until they had passed the forks, by which time the General could get troops up to stop them in the narrow defile they must pass in coming down on this side!

The Squire was in great excitement; he puffed, his face was red, his fists clenched. Washington looked at him, studied him. The young staff officers crowded round. The General said that he could hardly believe him; his aides had brought him other reports.

"You are mistaken, General, my life for it, you are mistaken! Put me under guard until you find my story true!"

Some one of the staff laughed, and the old Squire trembled with indignation.

"If Anthony Wayne or Pers Frazer were here you would know whether to believe me or not!"

Some one of the staff remarked that the old fellow looked like a Tory; some of them sneered. The Squire turned on them and shook his fist and cried:

"I have this day's work as much at heart as e'er a blood of you!"

Then an aide came galloping with General Sullivan's compliments; Cornwallis had crossed the Brandywine and was already in his rear. The shade of sadness that almost habitually lay on Washington's face grew deeper.

The Marquis begged Washington to allow him to go and join Sullivan. Washington nodded his consent, and calling Gimat the Marquis galloped off up the Brandywine. He spurred his horse; there ahead, great clouds of September dust rose in the heat of the afternoon; the firing was growing louder and louder; he urged his horse up a hill near a little white Quaker meeting-house; then, suddenly, Sullivan's men, fleeing in panic.

He leapt from his horse, flung himself into the mass of struggling, swearing, terror-stricken men, shouting at them, trying to stop the retreat. Lord Stirling was forming his brigade on a rise of ground and opening fire; he managed to reach Sullivan and Lord Stirling and with them fought until the British were within twenty yards. Some one touched him on the arm and pointed; blood was trickling out of his boot, and for the first time he realized that he had been wounded. Gimat helped him to remount, and begged him to retire; but he stayed on, until he grew weak from the loss of blood. And then he found himself caught up in the horde that poured along the road to Chester. Night was falling, and in the horrible confusion of that struggling, cursing mob he could do nothing; he was faint and sick and swayed in his saddle; Gimat tried to keep by his side and to hold him up. *"Courage!"* he was saying. They were borne along helpless on the tide of that rout for twelve miles until they reached a bridge near Chester; there he once more tried to stop the retreat, ordered

men to guard the approach of the bridge and re-established some sort of order. Then Washington came, very much moved, and peremptorily ordered him to retire and have his wound dressed.

"Treat him as though he were my son," he said to the surgeons.

That night he lay at Chester, and the next day, with other wounded, was taken to Philadelphia. He heard that the Commander-in-Chief had mentioned him in dispatches to the President of Congress. And nothing could matter after that.

Valfort came to see him; Valfort was going back to France and would be glad to take any letters.

I write you two words, my dear heart [he wrote to Adrienne], by some French officers, friends of mine, who came here with me and who, not having been placed, are returning to France. I begin by telling you that I am well, because I wish to finish by telling you that we fought yesterday in good earnest, and that we were not the stronger. Our Americans, after having held their ground for a fairly long time, finished in déroute, and while I was trying to rally them, Messieurs the English paid me the compliment of wounding me slightly in the leg. But that is nothing, my dear heart, the ball touched neither bone nor nerve, and I am let off by being laid on my back for some time, which puts me in a very bad humour. I hope, my dear heart, that you will not be uneasy; it is, on the contrary, a reason for being less so; because here I am out of active service for some time, and it is my intention to take good care of myself; be persuaded of that, my dear heart. This battle, I fear, will have very bad results for America. But we must make up for it, if we can. You must have received several letters from me, unless the English have as great a grudge against my epistles as they have against my leg. I have only received one from you, and I long for news. Adieu; they will not let me write any more. I have not had any sleep for several days. We spent last night

in making our retreat and in my journey here where I am very well cared for. Tell my friends that I am well. A thousand tender respects to Madame d'Ayen. A thousand compliments to the Viscountess and to my sisters. These officers will leave soon. They will see you; how happy they are! Good-night, my dear heart; I love you more than ever.

But he could not remain long in Philadelphia; the English were coming, the inhabitants were fleeing, Congress was packing off to York; after a week the Marquis and his good Gimat were taken by water to Bristol. Then Henry Laurens, on his way to York, came along and took them up in his travelling carriage and drove them to Bethlehem, where La Fayette could be cared for in the Moravian settlement. They arrived late in the evening, to find Bethlehem gorged with refugees; the stone dormitories of the Single Brethren had been turned into hospitals and were full of wounded soldiers, and the Sun Inn was so crowded that they could only stay the night there; but Henry Laurens was a great friend of the Moravians, and when he told them who the interesting young officer was—a distinguished Marquis of high birth and all that—Mrs. Barbara Boeckel, wife of the head farmer of the Bethlehem farms, took the Marquis to her own house, and placed the whole of the upper floor at his disposal.

VI

It was an excellent place for convalescence; a cloistral peace brooded over the Moravian settlement, though doubtless there were secret envies, jealousies and hatreds there as elsewhere. Philadelphia had fallen; Cornwallis at the head of his Grenadiers had ridden into the town; but Philadelphia was a long way off—twenty leagues at least. The

autumn sun came in at the Marquis's sitting-room, and Leisel, Frau Boeckel's rosy daughter, hovered near and sighed.

He was a great favourite with the Brethren (to say nothing of the sisters). They mourned over his warlike folly, and tried to convert him to the theory of non-resistance. They did everything to distract and amuse him; they even lent him a book to read, a thrilling history of the Moravian mission to Greenland. There in the upper room of Frau Boeckel's house, reclining in a stout arm-chair with wings to keep off the draughts, his wounded leg resting on a chair before him, he wrote letters in his tall, angular handwriting, and received visits. Many officers came to see him, among them Thomas Conway, the Irishman from County Kerry, who had come over with du Coudray. Conway had been in the French army, had inserted the aristocratic particle in his name, assumed the title of Count de Conway and risen to the rank of major (and called himself, of course, colonel). He was just the man to impress the members of Congress, and they commissioned him brigadier-general. When the Marquis's valour at Brandywine and his wound made him famous overnight, the "Count" became assiduous and flattering, and paid him several visits at Bethlehem. Conway was not quite a Monsieur perhaps —his manners were rather like a hairdresser's—but the Marquis liked him. By his smile, his blarney, his knowledge of French, Conway gained the confidence of the Marquis, never a difficult thing for anybody to do. Gates, so Conway assured him, was the rising star, Gates who at Saratoga had whipped Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne, the most dashing general in the British army. Conway said that he and Gates must become better acquainted, they would like each other, he was sure; Gates had spoken so

pleasantly of the Marquis. And so the Marquis hailed the rising star in a letter of warm felicitation. "I can't let go your express without congratulating you about your happy and glorious success. . . . I am very desirous, sir, to convince you how I wish to cultivate your friendship."

His old companions aboard the *Victoire* came to see him also; Mauroy and *le petit Dubois* were about to return to France, not in a pleasant humour; they were disgusted with America and the Americans, and were going back to France to tell the truth about them. The Marquis was distressed, and wrote letters home to counteract the effect of the stories they would spread about when they got back.

Notwithstanding the pacific homilies of the Moravian Brethren, he was already planning other conquests, vast and glorious, embracing the whole globe, exploits that would echo the name of La Fayette round the world. He wrote to his cousin, the Marquis de Bouillé, then Governor of the Windward Islands, proposing a plan of attack on the British West Indies, to be carried out under the American flag (the Marquis, sword in hand, would lead the landing parties) and, in spite of his disgrace at Court, he wrote to the Count de Maurepas, proposing raids on the British agencies in India.

Thus the days passed at Bethlehem. He studied English —in which he was making rapid progress—talked to Gimat, and wrote love-letters to Adrienne. He had news of her only once, by a dashing young Polish officer, Count Pulaski, who had come out to join the insurgents, and he was anxious. It took months for a letter to reach France, and months for an answer to come back and, with the English fleet blockading the coast, there was never any certainty that letters would reach their destination. On October 16, 1777, he wrote:

I had nothing more important to do on the morrow of that affair than to write you. I told you that it was nothing, and I was right. The only thing I fear is that you did not receive my letter, as at the same time General Howe may have written to his master, the King, certain details, slightly puffed up, of his exploits in America; as he reported me wounded, he may have reported me killed also; that would cost nothing; but I hope that my friends and you above all will never give any credence to people who dared print, last year, that General Washington and all the general officers of his army, were together on a bark that capsized and drowned them all. Let us talk then of that wound; it pierced the flesh, without touching bone or nerve. The surgeons are astonished by the promptness with which it healed. They go into ecstasies every time they dress it, and pretend that it is the most beautiful thing in the world. That depends on taste. For myself, I find it a very nasty thing, very annoying and painful enough. If a man got himself wounded to amuse himself, he should come to see how amused I am in order to be the same. There now, my dear heart, is the story of what I pompously call my wound in order to give myself airs and make myself interesting.

At present, as wife of an American general officer, I must teach you your lesson. They will say to you: "They have been beaten." You will reply: "That is true, but between two armies *equal in numbers* and on the plain, the old soldiers always have an advantage over the new; besides they had the pleasure of killing many, indeed a great many more of the enemy than they lost themselves." After that, they will add: "That is all very well, but Philadelphia, the capital of America, the bulwark of liberty, is taken." You will reply politely: "You are fools. Philadelphia is a miserable city, open on all sides, of which the door was already closed; that the seat of Congress made it famous, I do not know why; that is all there is of that famous city which, in parenthesis, we shall make them give back before long." If they continue to ply you with questions, you will send them about their business in terms that the Viscount de Noailles will teach you, for I do not care to waste time in writing to you how to talk politics. . . . Just think, my dear heart, I have only

received news of you once—by Count Pulaski. I have had frightfully bad luck; and I am cruelly unhappy about it. Judge of the horror of being far from all that I love, in such desperate uncertainty; there is no way to endure it, and yet I know that I deserve no pity; why was I so mad as to come here? I am well punished for it. I am too sensitive, my heart, to undertake these *tours de force*. You will pity me, I hope; if you know all that I suffer, above all in this moment when news of you would be so interesting! I can not think of it without shuddering. I was told that a package from France had arrived. I have despatched expresses by all the roads and in every corner. I have sent an officer to Congress. I am waiting from day to day, you know, with all impatience. My surgeon, too, is waiting for it with eagerness, because this disquiet makes my blood hot with impatience, and he wishes me to be quiet. *Mon Dieu,* my dear heart, if I have good news of you and of all those whom I love; if these charming letters arrive to-day, how happy I shall be, and yet with what agitation I shall open them! Be at ease about the treatment of my wound, for all the doctors in America are aroused in my behalf. I have a friend who has spoken to them in a way to ensure my being well cared for, and that is General Washington. That inestimable man, whose talents and virtues I admire—the better I know him the more I venerate him—has been kind enough to become my intimate friend. His tender interest in me quickly won my heart; I am established in his household and we live together like two devoted brothers in mutual intimacy and confidence. This friendship makes me most happy in this country. When he sent his chief surgeon to me, he told him to care for me as though I were his son, because he loved me as much as a son, and, having heard that I wished to join the army too soon, he wrote me a letter full of tenderness in which he urged me to wait until I was entirely cured. . . . We shall talk of that on my return, and I count a good deal on boring the people whom I love, you first of all in consequence, by the story of my voyages, for you know that I am a great talker. Do be the same, I pray you, my dear heart, in all that you say for me to Henriette, my poor little Henriette. Kiss her a thousand times; talk to her about me, but do

not tell her all the bad things that I deserve. My punishment will be not to be recognized by her on my arrival. There is a penance that Henrietta will impose upon me. Has she a sister or a brother? It does not matter to me, provided I have a second time the pleasure to be a father, and that I learn it soon. If I have a son, I will tell him to learn his own heart well, and if he has a tender heart, if he has a wife whom he loves as I love you, then I will advise him not to yield to enthusiasms that will separate him from the object of his affections, because, afterwards, that sentiment gives one frightful anxiety.

VII

Old Kalb had not come to see him, for Kalb himself was laid by the heels, ill of a fever contracted in the wilderness. As he lay in bed he drew up and sent to John Hancock, the President of Congress, a memorial in which he did not mince matters.

I do not think that either my name, my services, or my person are proper objects to be trifled with or laughed at. I cannot tell you, Sir, how deeply I feel the injury done to me and how ridiculous it seems to me to make people leave their homes, families and affairs to cross the sea under a thousand different dangers, to be received and regarded with contempt by those from whom you were to expect only warm thanks.

If they did not wish to receive him as major-general in their army, he was ready to return to Europe; but his expenses must be paid; it would be painful to have to sue for damages.

That which in the position of the Marquis de La Fayette is noble disinterestedness would be, in mine, a piece of pure folly, for I am not rich. . . . And yet I am very happy that you yielded to his desires. He is a valiant young man, and no one will surpass him in enthusiasm for liberty and independence.

As soon as he was well enough to leave his chamber, Kalb discussed the business with the committee to which the matter was referred, and induced them to recommend to Congress a resolution declaring that Silas Deane had exceeded his powers, that the Baron and the Viscount de Mauroy be thanked officially, and their expenses paid. The resolution was adopted, and when they offered him paper money, he refused it, and forced them to give him gold. By this time the members of Congress had come to have considerable respect for this hard-bitten old soldier of fortune, and to realize that, after all, so much character might be of value to their cause; so they urged him to stay. But the testy old fellow shook his stubborn head, and told them that as he had not been received in the way that he had a right to expect, he would refuse. Accordingly he made preparations to leave, and set the day, September 15.

He received the money from Congress and distributed it among his followers, and, accompanied by Lesser, Valfort and du Buysson, left Philadelphia and took the road for Lancaster, intending to embark at some southern port. Mauroy, Fayoles, Franval, Vrigny, Duboismartin and Candon went on to Boston. Kalb had a curiosity to see the settlement of Moravian Brothers—"in German *Herrenhutter,*" as he was careful to explain to his wife—and turned aside to Bethlehem, but he was overtaken by a messenger sent to tell him that, on that very day, after he had left, Congress had unanimously nominated him major-general. But he was not to be so easily mollified; he said that he would take time to think it over and went on to Bethlehem to see the *Herrenhutter.* Oddly enough for him, now that he had his commission, he began to hesitate. He longed to see his wife and children; he had more reasons for going back to

France than for staying in America, and he feared that whichever way he decided he would be blamed; Mauroy, *le petit Dubois* and the others had left in an ugly mood; what would they report in France? And the splendid scheme to make the Count stadtholder and generalissimo, the Prince of America? How was he to convince the Count of the utter absurdity of that fantastic dream? He wrote to Broglie—a full account of the battle of "Vilmington," and a lengthy paragraph about Washington, the kindest, most obliging and most honest of men, though a little slow as a general; but still nothing about the stadtholdership; it was hard to write. He could not bring himself, indeed, to say it, until he got to the end of the letter. "If I leave again for Europe it is in great part because it is impossible to succeed in the grand project that I took up with so much pleasure. Monsieur de Valfort will tell you that the proposition is not feasible; that it would be regarded as a crying injustice against Washington and an outrage on the country."

He went to York, still hesitating; finally he agreed to accept on condition that du Buysson be commissioned major and remain as his aide-de-camp; this was accorded, and he wrote to Broglie: "If Washington does not find it convenient to give me the vacant division that Congress promised me, I shall rejoin Monsieur de Valfort and go back." He could lay down conditions to politicians, and bend Congress to his stubborn will, but he had not yet been in the presence of Washington. On October 14, he joined the army, went to headquarters and there the old dragoon clicked his heels, saluted smartly, and stood at attention before the Commander-in-Chief.

Afterwards, of course, he wrote about it to Broglie:

I was very well received by the General, against whose wishes I did not care to take the command of a division that Congress had destined for me. I did that to please him, because he proposed to ask for the advancement of two brigadiers, friends of his, and to send away two major-generals. By this arrangement, as well as by the other, I shall have a division in a short time, and I believe that the Marquis de La Fayette will have one also.

He was still concerned for the Count's good opinion, and anxious to convince him that he had done all in his power not only for him but for his protégés.

I beg you again, Monsieur le Comte, to be persuaded of the respect and the deference that at all times and in all places I have for your orders and for your wishes; that I have done all that lay in my power for the officers whom you protect; that if I have not done better it is not my fault. Monsieur le Marquis de La Fayette and Monsieur de Valfort know my entire conduct in this respect; I rely on the good faith of these gentlemen for that; it is only necessary to compare their treatment with that of the officers of Monsieur du Coudray and others to judge whether my solicitations and my influence have accomplished anything or not. . . .

But the pretensions of du Coudray were silenced in a sudden and tragic manner. Kalb put it all in his next report to Broglie:

Monsieur du Coudray, by his death, has just put Congress very much at ease. . . . He was going to join the army the 16th September and, passing the Schuylkill on the ferry, he did not dismount and, as he was trying to control his skittish horse, it leapt into the river and drowned him like a schoolboy.

Even the Marquis, who seldom said anything unkind of anybody, considered "the loss of this mischiefmaker perhaps a happy accident."

VIII

His wound was not yet sufficiently healed to enable him to wear a boot, and Washington had urged him to stay where he was until he was fully recovered, but it was hard to remain inactive while things were going from bad to worse—the battle of Germantown lost, Fort Mifflin and Fort Mercer taken by Cornwallis and the Americans defeated everywhere. And so, on October 18, he left Bethlehem and joined the army at Methacton Hill.

Washington welcomed him back into his family with as much affection as his English nature would permit him to show. He was solicitous about Madame de La Fayette, indeed the whole army was interested; the romantic story of the young nobleman was known to everybody, his youth and charm had won every heart; and now that he had been wounded by their side, officers and men welcomed him back as a blood brother, and were sentimentally concerned for the young wife whose letters never came, and the new baby in the rue Saint-Honoré far across the sea at Paris. Everybody of importance in the country was watching out for couriers from France; when a diplomatic bag from Franklin arrived at York, they began to ransack it to see if the Marquis had received the long-expected letter from his wife. Much as he liked all this flattering attention and adulation he was not happy; he was anxious and he was idle, with nothing to do but to write long homesick letters to his *cher cœur,* without knowing when, if ever, they would reach her.

I have no other resource, my dear heart, but to write again without hope of my letters reaching you, and in trying, by the pleasure of conversing with you, to console myself for the pain and mortal torment of not receiving a word from France. It is im-

possible to tell you how anxious my heart is, how often torn. I do not even try, for I do not wish to spoil with dark forebodings the sweetest moments of my exile which are those when I can talk to you of my tenderness. At least, you pity me; you understand how much I suffer, don't you? If I only knew what you were doing and where you are! . . . I watch for your letters with an avidity that nothing can distract. They promise me that some will arrive soon, but can I trust in that? If my happiness still interests you, my dear heart, do not neglect a single chance of writing to me. Tell me again that you love me, and the less I deserve your love the more the assurance that you will give it to me is a necessary consolation to me. . . . Is it not a frightful thing, my dear heart, to think that it is by the public, by the English papers, by gazettes that come from the enemy, that I get my only news of you? In an article, useless enough to be sure, about my arrival here, they finish by speaking of you, of your pregnancy, of your confinement, that object of my fears, my hopes, my agitation, my joy. What happiness it would be for me, if I learnt for a second time that I was a father, that you were well, that my two children and their mother were getting ready to make me happy for the rest of my life! This country is charming for its paternal and filial affection, which is here pushed to a passion and to a point that is truly touching. The news of your confinement will be received with joy by the army, and above all by him who commands it.

I am going to find my poor little Henriette very sweet when I come back; I hope that she will preach me a good sermon and that she will talk to me with all the frankness of friendship, for my daughter will always be to me, I hope, the best of friends. I only wish to be a father in order to love, and paternal love will agree marvellously with friendship. Kiss her, my heart. Shall I say kiss *them* for me?

A week later, from camp at Whitemarsh, he wrote again:

You will receive this letter perhaps, my dear heart, in five or six years, because I am writing to you by an unexpected occasion of which I have not a very high idea. Just think of the tour that

my letter is going to make. An officer of the army will carry it to Fort Pitt, three hundred miles away at the back of the continent. After that it will be embarked on the great Ohio river, across countries inhabited only by savages; once arrived at New Orleans a small boat will carry it to the Spanish Islands, there a ship of that nation will take it; God knows when it will return to Europe, but it will still be a long way from you, and only after being soiled by the dirty hands of all the Spanish postmasters will it be allowed to cross the Pyrenees. It will probably be unsealed and resealed five or six times before it is put into your hands, then it will be a proof to my dear heart that I neglect no occasion, even the most unlikely, to send you my news and to repeat how much I love you. . . . Not a single letter from you; not a single one, my dear heart, has reached me. The others are lost, taken, at the bottom of the sea, from all appearances. I can only blame this frightful privation on the enemy, because surely you did not neglect to write me by every means, by every courier of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane. Ships have arrived, and I have sent expresses to every corner of the continent, but all my hopes have been frustrated. Apparently you are not well enough. I beg you, my heart, to inform yourself with attention of the means to send some letters. The privation is so cruel, I am so unhappy to be separated from all those I love. Entirely to blame, as I am, for my own unhappiness, you would surely pity me if you knew all that my heart suffers. . . .

Adieu, my dear heart, take care of your health. Give me news of yourself in every detail, believe that I love you more than ever, and that I look upon you as the first object of my tenderness, and the greatest source of my happiness. The sentiments engraved on a heart that is all yours will be preserved there until its last sigh. Will you love me always, my dear heart? I dare to hope it, and that we shall make each other as tenderly happy by an affection as tender as it is eternal. Adieu, adieu, how happy I should be to take you in my arms at this moment, and to say to you myself: "I love you more than I ever loved you, and it is for all my life."

IX

He grew more and more restless, discontented and unhappy. The promised command was not forthcoming. There was no charm and little interest in the stark and barren scene of the colonies, in that hard, realistic American light, in the midst of crude, provincial surroundings, where everything was new and provisional. Life had few graces and amenities; there was little politeness and gentility; he was compelled to converse with his companions, kind though they were, in a tongue that was strange to him, and he was separated from them by that mysterious difference in race and mentality which no proficiency in language, no foreign residence, however long, can ever bridge. He suffered at times from the dark mood that exile breeds in a man after his first illusions are tarnished, and it was not strange that he should think of throwing up the empty honour of his commission and going home. He even hinted as much to Washington; but Washington did not like to lose him; the Marquis and young Hamilton were the only ones who, by their loyalty and affection, and their youthful spirits, could make his great task a little lighter. And so Washington wrote another letter to Hancock: "It appears to me, from a consideration of his illustrious and important connexions, the attachment which he has manifested for our cause, and the consequences which his return in disgust might produce, that it will be advisable to gratify him in his wishes; and the more so, as several gentlemen from France, who came over under some assurances, have gone back disappointed in their expectations."

While they were waiting for an answer, an opportunity of glory presented itself. Sir William Howe was settling in for the winter at Philadelphia and Lord Cornwallis was

sent across the Delaware to raid farms in the Jerseys. He established his base at Gloucester, under the guns of the British fleet. But Washington ordered General Greene to follow and harass him, and La Fayette begged to be allowed to join the expedition. His wound had not fully healed; he still limped, but the idea of raiding in the Jerseys was irresistible. Greene was delighted to have him; the weather was gloomy and severe, campaigning was disagreeable and the Marquis was good company, had "a noble enthusiasm," and was "one of the sweetest tempered young gentlemen" in the world. They crossed the Delaware and went into camp at Mount Holly, and La Fayette asked the General to let him reconnoitre Cornwallis's position. The good-natured Greene could not resist, and the Marquis took Gimat and three other young French officers, Colonel Laumoy, the Chevalier Duplessis and the Marquis de La Rouerie—who, having left France because of a disappointment in love, was serving in America under the *nom de guerre* of "Colonel Armand." His force consisted of a small detachment of Light Horse, a hundred and fifty Riflemen—lithe fellows from the frontier, dressed like trappers, all hard as nails, who, with their smooth-bores, could bring down a squirrel out of the tallest tree—and two pickets of militia of about seventy-five men each. This small command, barely three hundred in all, the exiguity of whose numbers was compensated by the high rank of its officers, set out with fife and drum, in gay spirits, youth hot for adventure, marched twenty miles to Haddonfield, spent the night there and the next morning took the road to Gloucester. Near the town the Marquis concealed his force in a wood, dismounted and alone went boldly out on Sandy Point, a narrow spit of land that thrust itself into the river at the mouth of the New Town Creek. The British men-

o'-war lay on the broad Delaware; at Gloucester ferry Cornwallis's barges under their long sweeps were carrying over to Philadelphia great quantities of forage and provisions commandeered from Jersey farms. Out in mid-stream Howe's frigates lay at anchor; he could see sentries pacing the decks, hear the bugles calling, and the mellow tone of the bells striking the hours; even see the little peevish waves lap at their oaken sides. Across the mouth of New Town Creek he could see, above an earthen redoubt, the tall shakos and bayonets of a Hessian outpost. His companions, under cover of the wood, watched him with their hearts in their mouths. Gimat and La Rouerie begged him to retire.

"On vous verra, mon Général!"

But that was precisely the point; they would see him, and he never considered it a disadvantage to be seen in spectacular situations. It was not only those haughty English on the ships, or those pigs of Hessians in the trenches who could see him; it was the Frenchmen there behind him, it was those Americans; they should see how daring, how magnificent he could be!

At last, consenting to retire, he ordered his command out of the woods, made a wide detour around the town and at about four o'clock in the afternoon advanced along the Haddonfield road towards Gloucester, and sent a scouting party under Duplessis on ahead to get in touch with the enemy outposts.

The early twilight of November, already closing in, was deepened by the dense wood on both sides of the narrow road. The dusk was expanding between the trunks of the barren trees; the light was swiftly fading out of the narrow strip of sky overhead. They moved on silently, almost breathlessly, those youths, fairly sniffing the air for adven-

ture; the tall lithe Riflemen in fringed buckskin hunting-shirts, leggings and moccasins, their long locks falling from their coonskin caps to their broad shoulders, bent forward in the powerful stoop of the backwoodsman, stole stealthily along in front, as much at home in the woods and on an adventure like this as red Indians on the war-path. They advanced, listening with their sharp ears.

The Chevalier and his scouting party were swallowed up in the gloom of the road ahead. But suddenly shots echoed through the wood. The Marquis spurred his horse. The firing increased to a hot, rattling fusillade, the gloom ahead was stabbed with wicked red rifle flashes. The Riflemen dashed on, yelling like Indians; the Frenchmen galloped forward, *"Hop-là!"* The Light Horse came pounding on behind, the militia following after, and the whole mass plunged into the thick of the skirmish where Duplessis and his scouts had stirred up a Hessian outpost.

The Marquis's men burst upon the heavy, startled Hessians like a thunderbolt, and after a moment's resistance, the Hessians turned and ran pell-mell for Gloucester. The Marquis and his men dashed after them, chased them for half a mile, pouring volley after volley into those cross-belted German backs. The firing was heard in Gloucester; reinforcements were sent and were driven back. Lord Cornwallis, hearing that General Greene's army was attacking in force, rode out in person to the scene. But it had grown quite dark and when he learnt what it was he decided that it was not worth while to pursue the raiders. Besides, his lordship dined at five, and he must be getting back to town.

The exploit won him his division. Washington wrote again to the President of Congress; and on December 1, Congress resolved "that General Washington be informed,

it is highly agreeable to Congress that the Marquis de La Fayette be appointed to the command of a division in the Continental Army."

Washington gave him his choice of the vacant divisions, and he chose the Virginians.

X

It was while the army was on its way to Valley Forge on December 19, 1777, that the Marquis heard of the birth on July 1, of his second child, Anastasie Louise Pauline. The news came in a letter from the old Marshal de Noailles, who, in announcing the arrival of another daughter, spoke of it as "not the happiest event in the world." But, as the Marquis wrote to the Duke d'Ayen, "my anxiety was too great to make any distinction of sex," and the Marshal's goodness "in informing me that I had only a daughter, gave me a hundred times more pleasure than I could imagine. Here is the rue Saint-Honoré discredited for ever, whilst the other *hôtel* de Noailles has acquired new lustre by the birth of Adrien"—the son of the Viscount. He had had no word from his wife, but he sent her a letter by "the celebrated M. Adams"—John Adams, just then setting out to replace Silas Deane, whom Arthur Lee had at last succeeded in ruining, and he wrote her another letter to be borne by "an honest Frenchman who has come a hundred miles to take my messages," for everything had to be repeated half a dozen times if it was ever to get across those wide and troubled seas:

How happy that event made me, my dear heart! I love to mention it in all my letters, because I love to think of it every moment. What pleasure I shall have to take my two poor little girls in my arms, and to make them ask their mother to pardon

me! You do not believe that I am so insensible and at the same time so ridiculous that the sex of our new child could diminish in any way my joy in its birth. Our caducity is not yet at the point where it prevents our having another child without a miracle. But as for that one, it is absolutely necessary that it be a boy. Besides, if it is on account of the name that one is annoyed, I declare that I have formed a project of living long enough to bear it many years myself, before being obliged to give it to another. . . . Several officers are bringing their wives to camp; I am very envious, not of their wives, but of the happiness they have in being able to see them. General Washington too is about to decide to send for his. As for the English gentlemen, they have received a reinforcement of three hundred damsels from New York; and we have captured from them a vessel full of the chaste wives of officers who are coming to join their husbands; they [the wives] were in great fear of being kept for the American army.

Patrick Henry wrote to Washington, enclosing two letters for the Marquis; he believed that "one of them was from his lady." But again he was disappointed. There was no letter from Adrienne. Had he but known, she had been very ill. She had not heard of his arrival in America until August 1, a month after the birth of Anastasie, and she had suffered cruelly from anxiety. The newspapers, French, English and Dutch, had published the most sensational and preposterous tales about the adventurous youth who had become the hero of the Western world. The *Correspondance de Métra* and the *Courrier de l'Europe* had announced his arrival at Boston on May 30, and said that he had raised a regiment at his own expense. The *Gazette* of Amsterdam said that he had won a battle; then it was reported at Paris that he had been killed. To shield her from these alarming rumours, the Duchess d'Ayen had taken her daughter to the country.

The Marquis had seen some of "the gazettes with which

the English inundate us," and wrote to the Duke d'Ayen that they were intended "to amuse the chairmen of London beside a mug of porter, and even then they have to drink several swigs before they can be deceived by their bad faith."

At Valley Forge he assumed command of his new division, which was hardly up to the strength of a regiment. Enlistments had ceased and desertions were increasing. His men were half naked; he was ready to pay for their uniforms out of his own pocket, but the cloth was hard to get. He had been promised recruits, but they were even harder to get, and even if he got them, "it would be necessary to make soldiers out of them in about the same time" that it would take to make their uniforms. They lived in rude little log huts which they built themselves, but these were poor shelters against the blasts of winter that beat pitilessly upon them, and the deep snow that swirled. They had no clothes—coats, shirts, hats, boots, all were wanting. Even generals wore cotton bonnets over their ears and instead of greatcoats, wrapped themselves in heavy woollen blankets like those issued to the indigent sick in hospitals in France. Bleeding feet left dark traces on the snows; many a man's feet were frozen and had to be amputated. They had no money, no transports and but little food. Often they had only one ration a day, and now and then went whole days without provisions at all. The Quaker farmers in the region were too pious to fight, refused Continental money and sold their grain and beef to the English in Philadelphia, for British gold. "The patient fortitude of the officers and soldiers," wrote the Marquis, "was a continual miracle that each moment renewed." It was there, in the snows of Valley Forge, and not at York, that the flame of the Revolution was mysteriously kept alive through the dark hours

of that winter, by the steadfast will of Washington. He was obliged to conceal his desperate plight from the enemy; and to conceal it from the enemy he must conceal it from the country. He hid it from Congress—even when they were urging him to the madness of an attack on Philadelphia—for, had it become known, the enemy would have been upon them before what the Marquis called the "slowness of a democracy" could have provided any remedy. He even kept it from certain of his generals. But not from the Marquis. Between him and "the Boy"—as the English called him, a perfect understanding was growing up, and the Boy, even then, barely twenty years old, in the blackest hour of the struggle, when the country had all but lost faith in Washington, wrote to the Duke d'Ayen:

> Our General is a man truly made for this revolution, which could not be successfully accomplished without him. I see him more closely than any man in the world and I see that he is worthy of the adoration of his country. His tender friendship and his entire confidence in me in regard to all military and political subjects, great and small, that occupy him, place me in a situation to judge of all that he has to do, all that he has to conciliate and overcome. I admire more each day the beauty of his character and of his soul. Certain foreigners, offended at not having been placed, although that in no wise depended on him, and some whose ambitious plans he was not willing to serve, certain jealous caballers, have tried to tarnish his reputation; but his name will be revered in all ages by all lovers of liberty and humanity.

As they sank deeper and deeper into the misery of the winter, discipline became more difficult and more necessary to keep the army together. The Marquis patiently made the rounds of the sentry posts every night; did all he could to promote their comfort, to keep up their spirits.

He became known as "the soldier's friend"; they all adored him, even the French officers. He shared all their hardships, and refused all the privileges that he might have enjoyed. When Martha Washington came to Valley Forge to see His Excellency, and wished to send special provisions from Mount Vernon, His Excellency would not consent; he and the Marquis refused to eat even the delicacies that she did bring. *Noblesse oblige.* He transformed his clothes, his table, his manners, and made them as American as a Frenchman could. He tried to be more simple, more frugal, more austere than any of them. Until log huts could be built for the soldiers, Washington and he lived in tents. The boy who had been accustomed to the luxury of the old Count de La Rivière's apartment in the Luxembourg, and the mirrored splendours of the *hôtel* de Noailles in the rue Saint-Honoré, lived now in a tent with the thermometer below zero and snow sifting in, and ate greasy salt pork, hard-tack and hominy. And all he wrote to Adrienne about it was that they were passing "the winter under little hovels that are not very much gayer than a dungeon. I do not know if it will be convenient for General Howe to visit our new city, but we shall try to do the honours of it for him, and the bearer of this letter will tell you of the agreeable sojourn that I prefer to the happiness of being with you, with all my friends, in the midst of all possible pleasures."

He was homesick, of course; they had written to him, his wife, his father-in-law, all of them, begging him to come home, and now that the army was in quarters for the winter, and military operations suspended until spring, there was, perhaps, no reason why he should not go.

But he wrote them that he could not go, because of "reasons of state," which he hardly dared to disclose. Con-

gress, in its refuge behind the Susquehanna, was torn into factions. Political rancour was running to appalling lengths; the Viscount de Mauroy, writing to the Count de Broglie, said: "This country is subject to the same passions as ours, only the passions here are entirely naked, without the art which renders ours at least supportable." A conspiracy was hatching, with wide ramifications reaching out across the sea. The Lees and the Adamses had long hated Washington. Arthur Lee in London was hand in glove with John Wilkes, the radical demagogue, who was storming the House of Commons with a mob at his heels, and sending shivers down the backs of the Tories and city merchants. Lee had already completed the ruin of Silas Deane, and was now plotting against Franklin, his other colleague, trying to have him recalled, as Deane had been, or was about to be. The object of the cabal was to ruin Washington. Washington, they said, had failed; he had lost the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, let Philadelphia slip out of his fingers and left Congress no place to lay its head; Gates was the man, Gates, who had won the only success of the war. And while Washington was at Valley Forge, with the soldiers, Gates was at York with the politicians—the coming man. The people, the Marquis observed, attach themselves to a lucky general, and Washington had not been lucky.

In the country at large things were in quite as bad a way. The paper money was worthless; Congress was afraid to levy taxes and had no means of collecting them if it did. Prices were exorbitant, and callous and greedy speculators were gorging themselves with enormous profits. Trading with the enemy was a common practice, with no way to stop it, and out of the privations and misery of the people fortunes were being made and vulgarity was triumphant. Dis-

gust and weariness of the war, a longing for peace at any price, were beginning to weaken the resistance of the masses. If the people looked towards New York, it was to gaze upon the spectacle of Sir Henry Clinton, with a numerous garrison, living upon the fat of the land, whilst a small band of Continental soldiers, ragged and hungry, wandered aimlessly up and down the west bank of the Hudson.

Sir William Howe, with twenty thousand veteran troops, Guards, Grenadier Guards, Hessians and Anspachers, were quartered comfortably in Philadelphia, and twenty miles away to the north the broken remnant of Washington's defeated army was reduced now to barely five thousand men, starving in their rags. The wonder was that Howe did not march out from Philadelphia some morning and wipe them all out; he could have done it easily and been back in time for dinner and the ball that evening. The Marquis and the French officers who gathered at his headquarters in the Berwyn road could not get over it; they were amazed, and the English became more incomprehensible to them than ever.

No doubt Sir William, from some cousinly reluctance of his own or of the Government in London, did not care to push the war; at any rate he was fond of his ease and pleasure; in the satirical rhymes of Francis Hopkinson, for the colonials had their poetasters too—

> Sir William he, snug as a flea,
> Lay all this time a snoring,
> Nor dream'd of harm as he lay warm
> In bed with Mrs. Loring.

She was beautiful and blond, and a detachment of others, less fair perhaps, had been brought for the officers. They gave private theatricals in the Old South Theatre—"The

Mock Doctor," "The Deuce Is in Him," and "No One's Enemy but His Own." Young macaronis were singing the latest song, composed by a subaltern on Sir William's staff:

And there was General Washington
Upon a strapping stallion,
A giving orders to his men
I guess there was a million.
Yankee Doodle keep it up,
Yankee Doodle Dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy.

There were balls at the City Tavern, where the belles of Philadelphia danced minuets with the officers and romped through Virginia reels.

The Tories had all gone back to Philadelphia and provincial society was in a flutter over the young English officers, who, lighted by link-boys, were borne in sedan-chairs from one rout to another every evening. Major André, a handsome young officer, with a pale, delicate face, was quartered in the house of Benjamin Franklin, and enjoying the Doctor's library; he had a talent for drawing, and drew amusing sketches on the programmes for the ladies at the balls. The people were entertained by the fine band of the Hessians, the clash of their cymbals was superb; the unsophisticated colonials had never heard anything like it. Those on whom the fat Hessians were billeted, however, did not like them quite so well; General Knyphausen smoked a huge meerschaum pipe all over the house, and at table spread butter on his bread with his large, blunt thumb. The officers gambled at loo and faro at the Bunch of Grapes and the Indian Queen, had drinking bouts at the London Coffee House, caroused at the City Tavern, and

gathered round the cock-pit in Morris's Alley. With these distractions to lighten the arduous task of war, they muddled through.

XI

And all the while Conway was tempting him. Conway, when he was not at Valley Forge, was at York, plotting with Gates. They were jealous of the Marquis's friendship with Washington and of his popularity in the country, which of itself, not to mention his influence at Versailles, was a tower of strength to the Commander-in-Chief. If they could not attach him to their side, they must detach him from Washington and persuade him to go home. And a rumour spread that he was about to return to France in disgust.

They tried to induce him to come to York, but he refused; then Conway came again to Valley Forge, and talked to him about Paris. It was spring in France—pollarded willows along the rivers, peach orchards in pink flower, primroses yellow in the grass; Paris waking in the morning under the soft lavender light of the Ile-de-France; the iron gates at the *hôtel* de Noailles opening in the rue Saint-Honoré and the surprise of the old *concierge* as the carriage rolled into the courtyard with the young Marquis home from the wars!

Why not? Conway wished he could be there to see it; had half a mind indeed to go himself—for was he not the soldier of the Marquis, ready to serve him in any way? The Marquis ought to go home now and enjoy his glory while his laurels were fresh and green. He was sorely tempted. . . .

And then the caballers made a move that brought down on Conway's head the wrath of all the officers in the army.

Congress, with the democratic predilection for committees and divided powers, created a Board of War to direct and control all military matters. Gates was president of the board, and Conway, raised to the rank of major-general, and assigned to duty as inspector general, was made a member.

Conway was the lowest in rank of the brigadier-generals, and at this extraordinary promotion, raising him over the heads of them all, the other brigadiers set up a howl. The army buzzed with the scandal of it; the officers talked of nothing else. The Marquis received a letter from a "young, good-natured gentleman at York, whom Conway has ruined by his cunning and bad advice," and this opened his eyes; then one morning, Lord Stirling quietly placed in his hands a package of letters and asked him to read them. They were part of an intercepted correspondence between Gates and Conway, in which Washington was referred to with hatred and contempt; the letters disclosed certain features of the plot in which Gates, Conway, Charles Lee and members of Congress were engaged to bring about the downfall of Washington. The Marquis read them with amazement, grief and shame. He rode at once to the stone farmhouse of Deborah Hewes, where the Commander-in-Chief on Christmas Day had established his headquarters. The ragged sentinel, his feet bundled in sacking, pacing his beat before the door, saluted; Black Billy, the General's valet, his wistful black face turned grey by the cold, rolled his melancholy eyes at him. Hamilton came into the stuffy little room and said that His Excellency was too busy to see him; was there anything that he could do? The Marquis turned away, disappointed; he came back, but His Excellency was still busy.

He went about his duties that day with a heavy heart,

as near to disillusion as he had ever been. He had thought that every man in America loved liberty, that all good Americans were united, that Congress had unbounded faith in Washington; and here they were, weaving a plot against the man who had become his idol, and he almost drawn into it. He returned to his new quarters in the Berwyn road, and by candlelight sat down and poured out his heart in a long letter to Washington, in which his sorrow, his regret and his affection, his "most tender and respectful friendship" overflowed.

Take away, for an instant, that modest diffidence of yourself (which, pardon my freedom, my dear General, is sometimes too great, and I wish you could know, as well as myself, what difference there is between you and any other man), you would see very plainly that if you were lost for America there is nobody who could keep the army and the revolution for six months. There are open dissensions in congress, parties who hate one another as much as the common enemy; stupid men, who, without knowing a single word about war, undertake to judge you, to make ridiculous comparisons; they are infatuated with Gates, without thinking of the different circumstances, and believe that attacking is the only thing necessary to conquer. Those ideas are entertained in their minds by some jealous men, and perhaps secret friends to the British government, who want to push you in a moment of ill humour to some rash enterprise upon the lines or against a much stronger army.

[As for Conway:] he calls himself my soldier, and the reason of such behaviour to me is, that he wishes to be well spoken of at the French court, and his protector, the Marquis de Castries, is an intimate acquaintance of mine; but since the letter of Lord Stirling I inquired in his character. I found that he was an ambitious and dangerous man. He has done all in his power, by cunning manœuvres, to take off my confidence and affection for you. His desire was to engage me to leave this country. . . .

You will find, perhaps, this letter very useless, and even inopportune; but I was desirous of having a pretty long conversa-

tion with you upon the present circumstances, to explain you what I think of this matter. As a proper opportunity for it did not occur, I took the liberty of laying down some of my ideas in this letter, because it is for my satisfaction to be convinced that you, my dear General, who have been indulgent enough to permit me to look on you as upon a friend, should know the confession of my sentiments in a matter which I consider as a very important one. I have the warmest love for my country and for every good Frenchman; their success fills my heart with joy; but, sir, besides Conway is an Irishman, I want countrymen who deserve, in every point, to do honour to their country. That gentleman had engaged me by entertaining my head with ideas of glory and shining projects, and I must confess, to my shame, that it is a too certain way of deceiving me. . . . I am now fixed to your fate, and I shall follow it and sustain it as well by my sword as by all means in my power. You will pardon my importunity in favour of the sentiment which dictated it. Youth and friendship make me, perhaps, too warm, but I feel the greatest concern at all that has happened for some time since.

The following day—it was New Year's Eve—he received a reply from Washington that put his mind and heart at rest.

It will ever constitute part of my happiness [wrote Washington], to know that I stand well in your opinion; because I am satisfied that you can have no views to answer by throwing out false colours, and that you possess a mind too exalted to condescend to low arts and intrigues to acquire a reputation. Happy, thrice happy, would it have been for this army, and the cause we are embarked in, if the same generous spirit had pervaded all the actors in it. But one gentleman, whose name you have mentioned, had, I am confident, far different views; his ambition and great desire of being puffed off as one of the first officers of the age, could only be equalled by the means which he used to obtain them. . . . How far he may have accomplished his ends, I know not; and, except for considerations of a public nature, I care not; for, it is well known, that neither ambitious

nor lucrative motives led me to accept my present appointments. . . . But we must not, in so great a contest, expect to meet with nothing but sunshine. I have no doubt that everything happens for the best, that we shall triumph over all our misfortunes, and in the end be happy; when, my dear marquis, if you will give me your company in Virginia, we will laugh at our past difficulties and the folly of others; and I will endeavour, by every civility in my power, to shew you how much and how sincerely I am your affectionate and obedient servant.

There was no going home now, and on January 6, 1778, he wrote to Adrienne:

Everything told me to leave; but honour told me to remain, and really, when you come to know in detail the circumstances in which I find myself, in which the army finds itself, my friends who command it, the whole American cause, you will pardon me, my dear heart, you will even excuse me, and I almost dare to say that you will approve me. If I could only have the pleasure to tell you myself of my reasons and in embracing you to ask a pardon that I am sure then to obtain; but do not condemn me before hearing me. Besides the reason that I have given you, I have still another that I should not like to tell to all the world, because that would have an air of giving me a ridiculous importance. My presence at this moment is more necessary to the American cause than you can think. So many foreigners whom they did not wish to employ, or whose ambition they did not wish to serve, have made puissant cabals. They have tried by all sorts of traps to disgust me with this revolution, and with him who is its chief. They have spread about as much as they could that I was going to leave the continent. On the other hand, the English have told it openly. I cannot in all conscience make it appear that all these people are in the right. If I leave, many Frenchmen, useful here, will follow my example. General Washington would be truly grieved if I should mention leaving to him. His confidence in me is greater than I dare to avow, because of my age; in the place that he occupies one may be surrounded by flatterers or secret enemies; he finds in

me a sure friend to whom he can open his heart, and who will always tell him the truth. There is not a day when he does not hold long conversations with me or write me long letters, and he is good enough to consult me on all the most interesting points. . . . All this engages me not to leave at a moment when my absence would do so much harm. Besides, after a little success in the Jerseys, the General, by the unanimous wish of Congress, has engaged me to take a division in the army, and to form it to my own wishes as much as my feeble means will permit. I must not respond to these marks of confidence by asking him his commissions for Europe. There is a part of the reasons which I confide to you to be kept secret. I could add many others but I do not dare to risk them in a letter.

You will learn by the bearer of this letter that my health is very good, that my wound is healed, and that the change of country has not had any effect upon me. Do you not think that after my return we shall be grown up enough to establish ourselves in our own house, to live there happily together, to receive our friends there, to establish there a sweet liberty, and read the gazettes of foreign countries without having the curiosity to go to them ourselves to see what is going on there? I love to build these castles in France of happiness and pleasure. You are always the half of it, my dear heart, and once we are reunited they will not be able to separate us or prevent us from enjoying together, and side by side, the sweetness of loving and the most delicious and tranquil felicity. Adieu, my dear heart, I wish so much that this plan could begin to-day. Would it not suit you? . . . Adieu, adieu; love me always, and do not forget for an instant the unhappy exile who thinks always of you with a new tenderness.

XII

One day late in January an aide-de-camp galloped up to his quarters in the Berwyn road; His Excellency's compliments, and would he be good enough to come to headquarters? He went; an express had just come from York,

and without a word Washington handed him a resolution adopted by Congress to the effect "that an irruption be made into Canada," and that the Marquis be appointed to the command of the Northern army to lead the expedition.

That was all; without another word the General turned away and left him to his own decision. It was, of course, the work of Gates and Conway. If they could not induce the Marquis to return to France, they must, at all events, detach him from Washington, and destroy the heroic legend that was already forming about his name. Conway knew his weak point—his French love of glory. And so the Board of War decided to pack him off to Canada, and in his dare-devil way, let him break his neck there.

He thought the matter over; nothing could have appealed to him quite so strongly as the idea of invading Canada at the head of an army, of wresting from England the French Canadian provinces, and wiping out the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. What would they not say at Paris, at Versailles, at the Epée de Bois, when they heard that he had added that grandiose exploit to the *fastes militaires* of France?

Washington, whose lightest word would have swayed him, made it a point of honour and dignity to say nothing that might influence him. But there was another man at Valley Forge whom he could trust, and that was old Kalb, and he talked it over with him. A committee of Congress was then visiting the camp, and the Marquis at once went to them and declared that he would not accept the commission; he would rather remain with his General even as an aide-de-camp than to accept any command in which he should not be subordinate to him. Then he obtained leave from Washington, and went to York, and on January 31 wrote to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, to make

his position clear. It was a long letter, written hurriedly, and under stress of excitement, for its English was rather more shaky than usual—Duponceau was not there to revise it for him. He thanked

the honourable Congress for the mark of confidence they have honoured me with in appointing me to the command of a Northern Army. I schall be very happy if circumstances, I mean such ways of succeeding as will be granted to my desires on every point, enable me to accept a favour which I have received with the most sincere gratefulness. . . . I got this leave from his excellency Gnl Washington and I repaired to this place to know in which light I could consider the expedition proposed to me against Montreal.

I have been surprised to receive the news of my appointment, and the instructions of my commission by any other hand than this of my general—it engaged me to make this very stranger to my mind and very strange in itself reflexion, that I was not perhaps looked on as a detachment of his excellency's army under his immediate command—However I hope that idea was groundless and I find even it was a ridiculous one—I look upon it a much higher honour and a much pleasanter satisfaction for me, to be considered only as an officer of his, under his immediate orders, than if I was in any other light—it is not for satisfying my own pride that I speak so, but for the advantage of the thing itself, and for complying to the sentiments which I know to be in the hearts of all the *frenchmen* who are to come along with me.

He demanded that Kalb be detailed to accompany him, and concluded:

I fancy that I will get the answer Congress will be pleased to make to the several articles of this letter about in the same time that my most interesting business with the board will be done—then, Sir, if I can hope to satisfy the views of Congress and the feelings of my own heart, I'l repair immediately to camp, and after taking the leave and the last orders of my general, I'l go

as far as possible with the officers who are to follow me, to the place where I hope to show by my conduct my gratefulness and my warm attachment for the United States of America.

Rather a plucky letter for a boy of twenty to write, even if he was a major-general; at any rate it impressed Henry Laurens, the President, and the Congress gave in. It was arranged that he should report directly to Washington and send only duplicates of his dispatches to Congress. With his Latin mentality he had found a formula that saved his pride and theirs, and preserved the respect he owed to Washington.

That night Gates gave him a dinner at his house at York, and at the hour when the toasts went round, and they were sitting in the candlelight cracking nuts and drinking port, the Marquis rose and proposed the health and the success of His Excellency General Washington, and they all had to stand and drink it. He thought that they blushed; but then, candlelight casts a ruddy glow on the faces of old politicians.

The plans were all made; the Board of War was to mobilize at Albany three thousand men, fully armed and equipped, to wait his arrival; Congress was to provide four hundred thousand dollars for the expedition. Gates, to cover the responsibility of the Board of War, gave him some additional "cautionary" instructions: "if, upon attempting the enterprise the Marquis shall be of opinion from all circumstances that it is not prudent to proceed on so large a scale as that beforementioned, he will go no further than a ravage and bring his troops off after doing what injury he can to the enemy, their vessels, stores or effects." As duplicity could go no further, there was nothing to detain him. Conway had gone on to Albany to assemble the Northern army and the necessary stores.

At the last moment he dashed off a letter to Adrienne to tell her of the "terrible task" he was undertaking in trying to free New France, and then he and old Kalb set out once more on their travels. They left York on February 3, 1778, and barely escaping drowning in crossing the Susquehanna, which was packed with floating ice, began their long journey of four hundred miles on horseback. The party, most of them, were of the old company of the *Victoire;* the Marquis had the faithful Gimat and La Colombe, who now had joined him as aide-de-camp, and Gouvion; Kalb took du Buysson. They got on very slowly; sometimes drenched by icy rains, sometimes blinded by snow. It took them a week to reach Flemington, in New Jersey; the Marquis was not sanguine of success, and wrote to Washington: "Lake Champlain is too cold for producing the least bit of laurel, and if I am not starved I shall be as proud as if I had gained three battles."

He had had one of his sudden revulsions of feeling, which was not surprising, considering the degree of frost registered by the thermometer, and his enthusiasm was cooling. Then he began to have suspicions. One Duer, a guide who was to have met him at Ringo's Tavern, failed to turn up; no one there had ever heard of him. Perhaps he had gone on with Conway; perhaps "they will conquer Canada before my arrival, and I expect to find them at the mansion of the Governor of Quebec. Could I believe, for one single instant, that this pompous command *of a northern army* will let Your Excellency forget a little us absent friends, then I would send the project to the place it comes from."

It was bitterly cold riding horseback northward across New York state in February, and they took to sleighs and rugs of buffalo-skins. At length, as he wrote to Washington, "I met Albany."

It was on the 17th. And instead of three thousand men, armed and ready, he found a few shivering militia; no clothes, no provisions, no sleighs, no snow-shoes—nothing. Conway had been there for three days, and his first words were that the expedition was impossible.

The Marquis was amazed, but two days convinced him that Conway, for once, was right. All the generals in the North—Schuyler, Lincoln, Benedict Arnold, declared that the thing was out of the question; it would be madness. Gates had assured him that General Stark would meet him with a large force, and would have burnt the English fleet before he arrived; but Stark knew nothing about it; he wrote, indeed, to ask what number of men he was expected to raise, and where he was to get them. The Marquis could not find twelve hundred fit for duty; and most of these were "naked, even for a summer's campaign." The men were dissatisfied and disgusted, they had not received a dollar of their pay. Of the four hundred thousand dollars promised by Congress only two hundred thousand had been received, and these had been seized by Colonel Hay for the department, which was eight hundred thousand dollars in arrears.

The Marquis was angry and humiliated; he realized that he had been tricked and deceived, made a fool of.

Why [he wrote to Washington, two days after his arrival], why am I so far from you and what business had the board of War to hurry me through the ice and snow without knowing what I should do, neither what they were doing themselves? I defy your excellency to conceive any idea of what I have seen since I left the place where I was quiet and near my friends, to run myself through all the blunders of madness or treachery (God knows what). Your excellency may judge that I am very distressed by this disappointment. My being appointed to the command of the expedition is known through the continent, it

will soon be known in Europe, as I have been desired, by members of Congress, to write to my friends; my being at the head of an army, people will be in great expectations, and what shall I answer? I am afraid it will reflect on my reputation, and I shall be laughed at. My fears upon the subject are so strong, that I would choose to become again only a volunteer, unless Congress offers the means of mending this ugly business by some glorious operation . . . but I will never ask, nor even seem desirous, of anything directly from Congress; for you, dear general, I know very well, that you will do everything to procure me the only thing I am ambitious of—glory.

He turned over in his anxious mind all sorts of expedients; a swift raid on the British fleet; an attack upon New York; but no, there was no hope in that. Sometimes he thought of giving up and going home. The only outlet for his feelings was in letters to Washington, and as they had "sent me so far from you in I know not what design," he feared that they might even obstruct his communications with his general. Here he was in an "afflicting and ridiculous situation, which really has no name," sent with great éclat at the head of an army to do great things; the American continent, the whole of France and Europe and what was worse, the English army were waiting. How the world would laugh at him! Whenever he tried to investigate conditions about him, to look into anything, they "spread clouds" before his eyes. "I avow, my dear general, that I cannot control the vivacity of my sentiments as soon as my reputation and my glory are touched. It is truly very hard that this portion of my happiness, without which I cannot live, should depend upon projects that I know only when there was no longer time to execute them. I assure you, my dear and venerated friend, that I am more unhappy than I have ever been."

February and March wore on in this unhappy way. He

gave leave to the department to borrow on his private credit if they could do so; he sent provisions and clothing to the garrison at Fort Schuyler and, thinking of the old Marshal de Noailles, more interested in his garden than in the wars that were shaking the world, he sent him American saplings and young plants.

Then the Hurons and Iroquois took to the war-path and began to devastate the frontier. "A few gew-gaws and a keg of rum from the English," he wrote, "sufficed to put the tomahawk in their hand." Horrific stories of their savage atrocities were told, and he began to fear that his wretched little command was in danger.

Schuyler and Duane invited him to go with them up the Mohawk Valley and attend a grand council of the Oneida and Tuscarawa Indians. They drove in sleighs, and found five hundred braves in plumes and war-paint, ready for the powwow. He got on well with the Indians, as the French always did—far better indeed than the English or the Americans—distributed gold louis among them to be proudly worn as medals, won their confidence, was adopted by them into their tribe under the name of Kayewla, made a treaty with them and, squatting in a large circle round the camp fire, smoked the pipe of peace with them. They wished to have a fort of their own, and he sent Gouvion to construct it for them. And he induced fifty of them to return with him to join his forces when he should return to Pennsylvania. "Love of the French blood," he wrote to President Laurens, "mixed with love of French gold louis, has induced these Indians to promise to come with me." And he gave a hint to Laurens of his dissatisfaction, and asked "permission to say that I should regard as not having been made for me, a command, however honourable it might be, in which I was not near to danger and the chance to act."

Then a letter came from Washington who hastened to dispel his fears for his reputation; they were

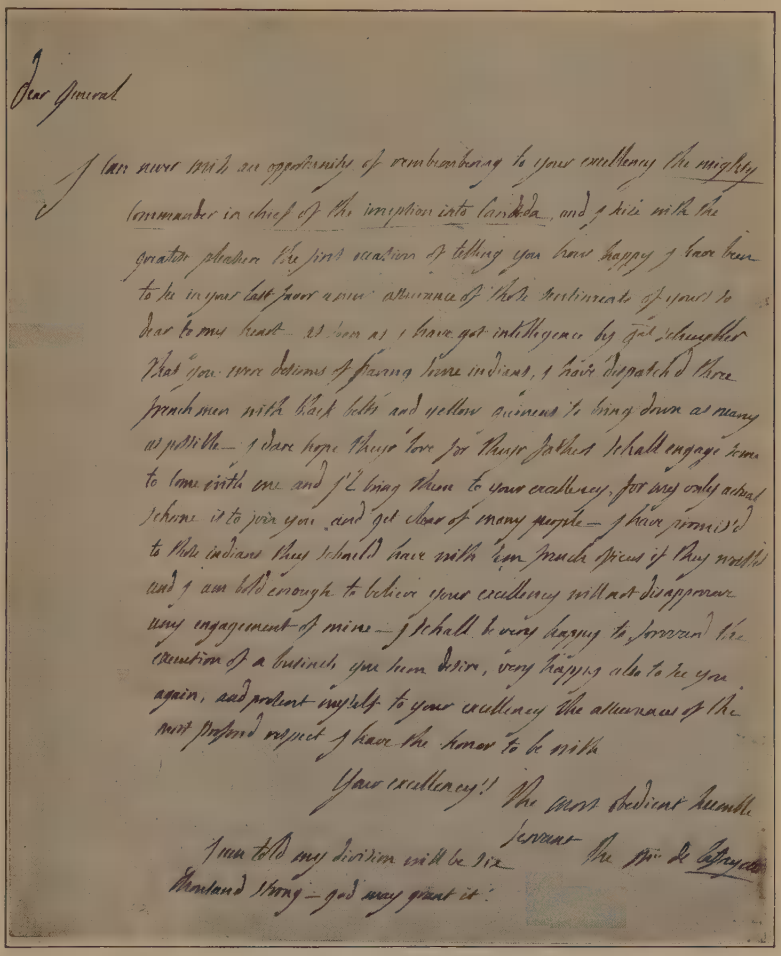
excited only by an uncommon degree of sensibility. . . . In the first place, it will be no disadvantage to you to have it known in Europe that you had received so manifest a proof of the good opinion and confidence of Congress as an important detached command; and I am persuaded that every one will applaud your prudence in renouncing a project, in pursuing which you would vainly have attempted physical impossibilities. . . . However sensibly your ardour for glory may make you feel this disappointment, you may be assured that your character stands as fair as ever it did, and that no new enterprise is necessary to wipe off this imaginary stain.

Then, on March 25, he received good news; Congress had adopted a resolution recalling him, and praising his prudence, activity and zeal. And he exhaled his joy in a letter to Washington.

I am touched by the goodness that endeavoured to dissipate my concern about the ridiculous expedition into Canada. At present we know the end that the honourable board had in view, and for what result three or four men would have dragged the country into heavy expenditure, risked the reputation of our arms, and the lives of several hundred men if the general, your friend, whom they wished to deceive, had been as imprudent and as foolish as they seemed to hope. O American liberty, what will become of thee, if thou remained in such hands!

What indeed!

So, early in April, he and Kalb rode back to Valley Forge. Conway, exposed at last, was drummed out of the army. He challenged General Cadwalader of the Continental army to a duel; they met and Cadwalader shot him through the mouth. As Conway lay on the ground dying, as they all thought, Cadwalader remarked, "Well, I've stopped one



Dear General

I have never had an opportunity of remembering to your excellency the mighty commander in chief of the invasion into Canada, and I write with the greatest pleasure the first occasion of telling you how happy I have been to see in your last favor a new assurance of that sentiment of yours to dear to my heart. as soon as I have got intelligence by Gal Schuyler that your views of passing those indians, I have dispatched three french men with black belts and yellow ceinture to bring down as many as possible — I dare hope those here for those fathers shall engage them to come with me and I'll bring them to your excellency, for my only object is to join you and get clear of many people — I have promised to those indians that should have with him french officers if they would and I am bold enough to believe your excellency will not disapprove my engagement of mine — I shall be very happy to forward the execution of a business you him desire, very happy also to see you again, and protest anew to your excellency the alleurance of the most profound respect I have the honor to be with

Your excellency's the most obedient humble servant the Mis de Lafayette

I now told my division will be six thousand strong — god may grant it.

A LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE
TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

damned lying tongue." Conway wrote Washington a letter begging his forgiveness, and saying, "In my eyes you are a great and good man." But he did not die, and, hated by every one except Washington, left America and returned to France.

XIII

Spring was creeping up the hills of Valley Forge when he returned, happy to be back once more with his General, and to sit down to dinner with the family. But he found the General even graver than he had been; the strain of the long cruel winter had told. The pitted skin on the large face, once so fresh and ruddy in its sandy complexion, was weather-beaten and drawn; the great blue eyes were sad; the resolute mouth, with its scar, was more firm and silent and its smile rarer than ever.

But with the spring, conditions at Valley Forge had improved. During the Marquis's absence in Canada, another foreign officer had joined the army at Valley Forge, Baron von Steuben, a Prussian, like Kalb, and had been appointed inspector-general to succeed Conway. He had been patiently, though perhaps not always patiently, but nevertheless efficiently, drilling that horde of raw and undisciplined recruits, licking them into shape, and by his excellent method was rapidly transforming them into trained soldiers. Greene, as quartermaster-general, had lightened the lot of the soldiers by his efficient management; his Conestoga wains were rumbling into camp with good food and good rum; droves of cattle were driven in, the men had full rations; new heart was put into them. They began to laugh again, played at fives, at cricket, at leap-frog, and sang about their camp fires in the spring evenings. A great barn was turned into a theatre; "The Fair Penitent" was played. Lady Washington,

Lady Stirling and Mrs. Greene had joined their husbands in camp, and they all went to the play. And when Congress heard of this appalling wickedness they adopted a resolution: "Whereas true religion and good morals are the only solid foundations of public liberty . . . any person holding an office under the United States who should attend a theatrical performance shall be dismissed. . . ." The Marquis and the other French officers could only look at one another and gasp! *Mon Dieu! L'hypocrisie anglo-saxonne!*

The lull in the leisurely military operations stretched on into the spring, and one April day the Marquis rode to Germantown to dine quietly in a tavern with his old English friend, General FitzPatrick, who had ridden out from Philadelphia to meet him. FitzPatrick was serving in Howe's army, and like La Fayette, had been wounded at Brandywine; he was going home, and would take letters for France.

There was a feeling of imminent change; something like hope was in the air, mysteriously borne to them across the sea. They knew that Franklin at Paris had been working away at old Maurepas and slowly, patiently, wilily, dragging him into the war. In London, where the subjugation of the rebel colonies had been found to be not so simple after all, Lord North was bringing in his Conciliation Bill, and Horace Walpole was writing to a friend that it was "to pass both Houses with a rapidity that will do everything but overtake time past." It did, and the Commissioners, the Earl of Carlisle, William Eden and George Johnston, were on their way to America to patch up a peace. Then on May 2, Simeon Deane, brother of Silas, landed from the French frigate *Sensible* in Casco Bay with great news; Vergennes and Franklin and Deane had signed treaties of alliance. The

first act of the American envoys after signing them was to drive to the Duke d'Ayen's house at Versailles, to pay their respects to the Marquise de La Fayette. Voltaire had been permitted to return from his long exile at Ferney, and finding the Marquise in the *salon* of the Duchess de Choiseul, had asked to be presented.

"I wish," he said, "to present my homage to the wife of the hero of the New World; may I live long enough to salute in him the liberator of the old!"

When the news was brought to Valley Forge, the Marquis leapt into the saddle, galloped down the Berwyn road to headquarters, burst into the General's presence and with tears of joy threw his arms about the somewhat startled Anglo-Saxon and planted two kisses, one on each cheek of His Excellency. The Commander-in-Chief never flinched; he stood there stiffly and endured this ordeal with the grave composure that never failed him in difficult situations, and when he was released from the embrace, he shook the Marquis warmly by the hand, and congratulated him as the one who had done more than any other man, perhaps, to bring this great event to pass.

The declaration of the French government to the British Cabinet had used these words: "The Americans, having become independent by their Declaration of the 4th July, 1776," and when the Marquis read it he smiled and said, prophetically, "There is a principle of national sovereignty that will be recalled to them one day."

Then the Marquis gathered Kalb and all the French officers at his headquarters in the Berwyn road, among them the Count Moré de Pontgibaud, an adventurous youth from Auvergne who had turned up one day at Valley Forge and been taken on by the Marquis as aide; they embraced and kissed all round, and from the bowl of grog that the

Marquis always kept on his table drank to the new alliance, and shouted *"Vive le Roi!"* and *"Vive Vasingthon!"*

That night bonfires blazed on all the hills at Valley Forge. Washington gave a dinner at headquarters, and issued a general order for a grand review of the troops: "It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe to defend the cause of the United States, and finally to raise up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth, to establish our liberty and independency upon a lasting foundation; it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the divine goodness, and celebrating the important event, which we owe to his divine interposition."

The army made a brilliant appearance—for Baron von Steuben's efforts were beginning to show. Major-General Lord Stirling commanded on the right, and the Marquis, sitting his white horse, erect in the saddle, his head thrown back in pride, a white silk sash in bandolier over his blue and white uniform, with all the French officers detailed that day to ride with him, commanded on the left. Old Kalb commanded on the second line, sitting his horse gravely, his little pigtail sticking out behind. The chaplains offered prayer; the artillery boomed; a running fire of musketry rattled up and down the long lines; the men huzzaed, "Long live the King of France" and "Long live the American States!" The drums rolled and they marched past Washington.

The Marquis was as conspicuous an object for admiring eyes that day as Washington himself; glory had come at last, and yet, with the inveterate irony of things, his heart within him was sad, for he had just heard that little Henriette had died in the autumn. It had taken seven months for the news to reach him.

How frightful is this separation! [he wrote to Adrienne]. I have never so cruelly felt how horrible this situation is. My heart is afflicted by my own sorrow and by yours which I have not been able to share. The immense time that I have been in learning of the event adds to it all the more. Think, my heart, how cruel it is, in weeping for what I have lost, to tremble still for what I have left. The distance from Europe to America appears to me more immense than ever. The loss of our poor child is in my mind nearly every minute. The news came to me immediately after the treaty, and while my heart was devoured by grief, I had to receive and to take part in the assurance of the public felicity. I learnt at the same time of the loss of our little Adrien, for I have always looked upon their child as if he were my own, and I mourned him as I should have mourned my son. . . . If the sad news that I received had arrived immediately, I should have left on the spot to join you; but the campaign which was opening did not permit me to leave; besides, my heart has always been convinced that in serving the cause of humanity and that of America, I am fighting for the interests of France.

But when Washington decided to remain on the defensive, the Marquis, who could never endure inactivity, became once more the prey of the old restless and dissatisfied spirit. He was anxious to be off again. "If my compatriots make war in any part of the world," he wrote to Francy, Beaumarchais's agent in America, "I shall fly to their flag, and as soon as the fleet and the packet arrive, if I do not receive precise orders of the King, I shall leave at once for the isles."

And then Washington found something for him to do. The English commissioners had arrived, and the first thing they did was to advise the removal of Sir William Howe, and Sir Henry Clinton was transferred from New York to Philadelphia. Anxious to learn what Clinton was preparing, he confided a force of two thousand of his best troops

to the Marquis, with instructions to march immediately towards the enemy's lines, "to obstruct the incursion of the enemy's parties, and to obtain intelligence of their motions and designs." He left Valley Forge on May 18, with General Poor and General Potter commanding under him. There were six hundred Pennsylvania militia, five pieces of cannon, an independent troop of Light Horse commanded by the dare-devil Captain Alan MacLean and the fifty Iroquois braves whom the Marquis had brought down from Canada.

He crossed the Schuylkill at Swede's Ford, and marched along the Ridge road to the village of Barren Hill. There, the next morning, he was talking to a young girl who had agreed to enter Philadelphia as a spy and learn what was going on there, when an aide came to report that a detachment of cavalry in red roats had been seen to the east in the Whitemarsh road. There was nothing surprising in this; Potter, whose forces were in the Whitemarsh road guarding his left flank, had some dragoons who wore red coats, and the Marquis assumed that it must be they. However, he sent aides to reconnoitre, and a few moments later they galloped back to report that an English column was marching along the road, and another moving towards Swede's Ford.

The fact was that Clinton had learnt from his spies the evening before that the Marquis had arrived at Barren Hill, and had determined to capture him. No social event of all that gay winter in Philadelphia had excited such pleasurable anticipation. Sir William Howe, though relieved of his command and superseded by Sir Henry Clinton, asked Sir Henry to allow him to accompany him, and Sir Henry, of course, consented. They laid their plans with scrupulous care; a splendid fête, the Mischianza ball, had already been

arranged in honour of Sir William's departure, and now, in addition, they ordered a large dinner to be served at headquarters on the evening of the 20th, and sent out invitations to the leaders of society, with a note to say that at the dinner they would "have the honour of meeting the Marquis de La Fayette," and Admiral Lord Howe hastened to fit out a frigate to convey the distinguished prisoner to England. The essential features of the plan having thus been attended to, nothing remained but to catch the Marquis. Eight thousand troops and fifteen pieces of field artillery were detached, and Sir Henry, on the evening of the 19th, sent General Grant with one column to go round by way of Frankford, and, coming in by the Whitemarsh road, to cut off the Marquis's escape by Swede's Ford and Matson's Ford. Sir Henry himself—with Sir William there to see the fun—was to lead a column up the Ridge road, and engage the Marquis in front, whilst General Grey, with a force of Grenadiers was to proceed by the cross-road towards Barren Hill, and take him in the rear. Then General Grant, having cut off the fords, was to close in behind. They would not have to fire a single shot; the Boy was theirs.

It was General Grey's dragoons whose red coats had been seen at the cross roads that morning; and the column moved on without the least obstacle, for, by one of those misunderstandings against which military commanders never seem able to guard, Potter had failed to take the post assigned him and when the Marquis's aides came in with their reports, Grey was almost upon his left flank. Grant, moving farther along the Whitemarsh road, had already cut off Swede's Ford, and was moving towards Matson's Ford, almost in his rear, while Clinton, with the Guards, was coming up the Ridge road from Philadelphia. And the Marquis suddenly realized that he was caught in a trap; his troops

knew it, and in a moment more would be in panic. From Valley Forge, eleven miles away, came the boom of warning guns fired by Washington, wild with anxiety. But he smiled reassuringly, and with the French genius for improvisation, instantly changed his front. There, below the bluffs, at Spring Mill, was Matson's Ford, and a road winding down to it; it was the only way of escape left to him; if only he could reach the ford before Grant! He threw out troops into the graveyard of the Barren Hill church to check Grey's advance; and then, making a feint, sent false heads of columns through the woods to deceive Grant.

However, as General Grant was coming along the road that morning he had passed the Broad Axe Inn, and as it was time for breakfast, he had to stop. Thus, he had not been able to get as far forward at that hour as he otherwise could have done, and when he saw the Marquis's false heads of columns, he halted and reformed his columns to receive them.

And all this while the Marquis's men, silently and in order, were filing down the road under the bluffs, out of sight of General Grant, towards Matson's Ford. The Marquis had detailed Poor to command the vanguard, and sent Gimat to help him; he himself remained to command the rear, and to be the last man over. His columns were unwound into the long narrow line that filed down under the bluffs and waded across the ford, looking, as Lieutenant Wickham said, "like the corks of a fishing seine." Clinton's vanguard of dragoons was coming up the Ridge road, when suddenly the Marquis's Indian braves leapt up from the ground with a wild war-whoop, and the startled dragoons fell back in retreat. The Indians, who had never seen cavalry in force, were terrified by the apparition of the dragoons, and dived into the river and swam across to

the other side. Clinton's columns reached Barren Hill, and the Marquis's deserted camp, just in time to meet Grant's columns emerging from the wood beyond. The two red columns met, and the two astonished commanders glared at each other. The Boy had outwitted them, and now, with his whole force, was safely across the Schuylkill. The two commanders glared at each other, swore a little, quarrelled for a moment and then, as the Marquis wrote, marched back to Philadelphia, "very much ashamed, very weary, and very much bantered because of their ill success."

XIV

It was summer now, and there were signs that something was preparing at Philadelphia; Washington was convinced that the city was about to be evacuated. The British Commissioners were addressing conciliatory messages, not remarkable for their tact, to Congress. And an exchange of prisoners had been consented to, which restored to the Continental army Charles Lee, who had been captured by the British in 1776. Lee was an Englishman—and, as the Lees of Virginia were always careful to point out, no kin of theirs—who had been a colonel in the British army. He had been cashiered, had taken service first with the Polish and then with the Russian army and finally come out to America and obtained a commission as major-general. The Marquis, who liked most persons, detested him. "His visage was ugly, his spirit sarcastic, his heart ambitious and mean, his character inconsistent; on the whole, a queer fellow." He never trusted him; indeed, he saw Lee's hand in the Conway cabal, and, like many others, believed that its purpose was, when Gates should have been put in Washington's place and Lee exchanged, to turn the supreme com-

mand over to Lee who was then to betray the army and the American cause to the English. But Gates was now out of the way, commanding at White Plains. Conway was no longer in the army and his place as inspector general had been given to Baron von Steuben, whose "methodical mediocrity," as the Marquis described it, had perfected the manœuvres and the organization of the army.

On June 17, Washington held a council of war and proposed an attack. The bravest and most loyal of his generals —Greene, Mad Anthony Wayne, the Marquis and Kalb— agreed with him. But Lee was strongly opposed, and as many of the generals had great respect for Lee's abilities as a soldier, his opinion prevailed. And the very next day Sir Henry Clinton, with his whole army, horse, foot and dragoon, baggage trains and prostitutes, to say nothing of three thousand loyalists, evacuated Philadelphia. They crossed the Delaware and took the road through Haddonfield and Mount Holly towards Allentown. The column stretched out for twelve miles along the road, and bound to the pace of its pack-horses and lumbering baggage-trains, moved slowly across Jersey. The weather was hot and thundery, and the men suffered intensely as they marched over the wretched sandy roads. When he heard that they had gone, Washington ordered Lee with three brigades to cross the Delaware at Coryell's Ferry northeast of Valley Forge, to take up the first strong position and await orders. The next morning, the 19th, Washington set out with the main army, consisting of three divisions, commanded by the Marquis, Kalb and Lord Stirling, and crossed into Jersey.

The two opposing armies were thus moving, side by side, and about twenty-five miles apart, towards the northeast. By June 24 Clinton had reached Allentown, where the road

forked; one route led to Amboy, the other to Monmouth; Washington moved on to Kingston, and while waiting to see which road Clinton would take, held a council of war; should they risk battle or not? Lee was vehement in his opposition; the moment of the alliance with France was not the one in which to take risks; the British army had never been in such excellent condition; it would be better "to build a bridge of gold for the English to pass over on," and to retire to White Plains. Lee was so eloquent and persuasive that he convinced Lord Stirling and the brigadiers. The Marquis had been sitting there almost bursting with anger and disgust; at last he could stand it no longer, and he leapt to his feet. His English was still faulty, but its imperfections were lost in its fire; he said that it would be shameful for the commanders and humiliating for the troops to allow the enemy to cross the Jerseys with impunity; they should pursue the English, cut off their rearguard and take advantage of favourable opportunities. General du Portail, commanding the engineers, supported the Marquis. But the majority sided with Lee.

That evening, however, the Marquis, Greene and Alexander Hamilton surrounded the General and urged him to follow his own inclination, and had no great difficulty in persuading him. On the 25th Clinton moved out of Allentown and took the road to Monmouth Court House. Then the General detailed a force of five thousand men, the pick of the army, to operate against him. The command of this body belonged, by seniority of rank, to Lee, but he declined it, and Washington turned it over to the eager and delighted Marquis.

He set out that day in light marching order, and by evening was at Cranbury Town, where he bivouacked in a

wood. That night he wrote to Washington: "We will be obliged to march pretty fast, if we want to attack them. It is for that I am particularly concerned about provisions. . . . We want to be very well furnished with spirits as a long and quick march may be found necessary, and if General Scott's detachment is not provided, it should be furnished also with liquor." He was up early the next morning, and at five o'clock, writing again to his "Dear General" that "General Forman is firmly of opinion that we may overtake the enemy. . . . I have no doubt but if we overtake them we possess a very happy chance."

He was full of confidence, and his men were in high spirits. It was the largest force he had ever commanded, and it was engaged in one of the most important operations of the war. He was almost within striking distance. There, before him, was Clinton's army, Grenadiers and Guardsmen sweltering in their bearskins and heavy red coats with high leather stocks, hussars in busbies, Hessians in leather shakos, laden with their packs, impeded by their lumbering baggage-trains, horses, farriers, cook-wagons, hustled along in that deadly, suffocating heat, over those killing roads of burning sands, tortured by swarms of Jersey mosquitoes, some of the men falling down dead from heat-stroke, many of them deserting and confusion and panic already spreading among them. Another march, and he could fall upon them, and with Washington just behind, ready to come up with the whole army, victory was certain; the glory he longed for, fought for, lived for, was almost at hand. He advanced to "Icetown," as he called Hightstown; another day, and he would have them!

It was all going smoothly.

Too smoothly in fact. At Hightstown he learned that Lee, jealous of Washington, jealous of him and perhaps

with sinister designs in his dark soul, had written to Washington, saying that he had changed his mind, and demanding that the command be turned over to him. The Marquis knew how Washington felt, and how this request would embarrass him; but Lee was second in rank in the army, and the General was just. And then suddenly, there was Lee himself, having ridden over from Kingston. He stalked into the room, tall, lean, uncouth, slovenly and repellent, but smiling now, and insinuating. He spoke in French. He bent towards him as he spoke, his eyes burning, his great beak of a nose thrust belligerently forward; it was most unpleasant, there was something evil and sinister in his personality, and yet something compelling, too. He begged the Marquis to relieve the Commander-in-Chief of embarrassment, and give up the command.

True, he had assented to the Marquis's taking command of the detachment, but he viewed it now in a very different light; he had considered it a proper thing for a young, *volunteering* general—why the invidious stress on that word?—but now he found that it was considered as the most honourable command next to the Commander-in-Chief. He entreated him, with a thousand apologies for the trouble he had caused him, not to stand in the way of his command.

The Marquis was embarrassed; he did not like Lee, and he did not trust him; he hesitated, and Lee, restless and uneasy, seeing that he was making no headway, did the very thing to gain his end; he appealed to the generosity of the Marquis.

"It is my fortune and my honour," he said, "that I place in your hands; you are too generous to lose either one or the other."

It was a tone that the Marquis could not resist, and he

promised to intercede with Washington. The enemy was in motion early next morning, seven or eight miles away. Dickinson reported that he heard heavy firing at the front of the enemy's column; it must be Morgan's men. The Marquis ordered Maxwell's and Wayne's brigades forward; he would fall lower down with Scott's and Jackson's troops and the militia; if he could overtake them he would attack the following morning. He had nothing to fear in striking a blow now. He had brought his movement to the verge of success, and was eager and excited. Nevertheless, he paused long enough to scribble and send back a note to Washington: "If it is believed necessary or useful to the good of the service and the honour of General Lee, to send him down with a couple of thousand men, or any greater force, I will cheerfully obey and serve him, not only out of duty, but out of what I owe to that gentleman's character."

He mounted; his bugler blew the "Forward," and they were off; they marched swiftly all day; at half-past four in the afternoon he was at Robin's Tavern. It was raining; thunder rolled and vivid flashes of lightning lit up the sky that night. But the thunder-storms brought no relief from the heat; they only saturated the heavy air with moisture and made it worse. The men gasped in the breathless, suffocating night; they lacked provisions, but they were all as enthusiastic as he. He sent Wayne and Hamilton to reconnoitre the position; he fancied that they would "lay about seven or eight miles from here." The heavy British columns in the awful heat of a sultry Jersey June, had been on the march since early morning, "with great confusion and fright." He had taken some prisoners, and deserters were coming in fast. He was within five miles of the enemy. The British column had crawled to, and partly through, Monmouth and now lay there, prostrate, covered with dust,

spent with the heat and fatigue, its head thrust out beyond the town. He had tracked him down at last.

And then, an aide, weary and covered with dust, came galloping up to the tavern, his horse lathered with sweat.

"General Washington's compliments, Sir."

The Marquis tore open the dispatches, ran his eyes down the lines written in the round, flowing script of the amanuensis:

> General Lee's uneasiness, rather increasing than abating, and your politeness in wishing to ease him of it, have induced me to detach him from this army with a part of it, to reinforce, or at least cover, the several detachments at present under your command. . . . General Lee's distress of mind, the delicacy of your situation . . . he will request you to prosecute any plan you may have already concerted. . . . I wish it may prove agreeable to you as I am, with the warmest wishes for your honour and glory, and with the sincerest esteem and affection—

But that was not all; there was another order. Washington was three miles in his rear, at Cranbury, but his troops had suffered terribly with the heat, a heavy storm was coming on, so he could not well advance beyond Cranbury that night, and fearing that the Marquis might get too far in advance to be supported in case of an engagement, he ordered him to file off by his left towards Englishtown. The Marquis read the orders, showed them to Hamilton, sitting at a table in the room with him writing a letter to Washington, and turned on his heel to hide his bitter disappointment.

He was half dead with fatigue, so weary that when he came to write to Washington he misdated his letter. It was too late to carry out the order that evening. "It is not on account of any other motive than the impossibility of moving the troops, and making such a march immediately,

for in receiving your letter I have given up the project of attacking the enemy. . . . I beg your pardon, Sir, if my letter is so badly written, but I want to send it soon and to rest one or two hours."

His hopes had been dashed, and he was nearly spent. He lay down and tried to sleep, but at two o'clock in the morning was up again and in the saddle, and long before daylight on the march. He led his troops to Englishtown and turned over the command to General Lee.

That afternoon Washington asked him to come to his headquarters at Englishtown; he went, and found Lee, General Wayne, General Maxwell and General Scott. Calling them all about him Washington told Lee that he intended to attack the enemy's rear as soon as they were on the march again; he was very explicit, and the Marquis thought it significant that the General should be so anxious to have them all hear; it was as though he desired to have witnesses. Having done this, he told Lee to call his generals together and with them concert a plan of action to carry out his instructions. Lee fixed the hour at five; and when they all appeared, Lee, with a supercilious indifference, did not even discuss the movement; he communicated no plan, gave no orders and, with a curious lack of a sense of humour, told them not to dispute about rank.

The next morning, the Marquis, eager to be in the fighting, bolted his breakfast in the house of Joseph Storey, rode to Lee's headquarters and asked for the command of the van. But Lee gave it to Wayne. At five, the British had begun to march, and an aide came to Lee from the Commander-in-Chief with orders to move forward and attack. The column moved out, the Marquis commanding a detachment composed of Scott's brigade and Wayne's former command. At eight o'clock they were on the left flank

of the British column, which was toiling on towards Middletown in great disorder and confusion.

The Marquis advanced, with his two brigades, keeping to the woods as much as he could, for the shelter and the shade, for even at that early hour it was very hot. Two miles east of the meeting-house the brigades debouched into a road on the left, and came out at last into a large open field in full view of Monmouth Court House. Wayne was far in advance; he must be in touch with the enemy by this time. Then, strange and conflicting orders began to arrive from Lee; aides galloped up and told them to halt; galloped away again, and returned to tell them to advance. He moved forward in the blazing morning sunlight, eager, excited; they were almost on the enemy. Then orders to halt again. He could not understand it; what did it mean? Was he going to miss the fighting after all?

He rode back to ask Lee what was the matter; Lee snapped out that reports of the enemy's movements did not agree; he was waiting for further information. The Marquis, perplexed as ever, rode back. The halt had left his troops in a hollow, facing a morass, a position in which it would be difficult to manœuvre, and he sent an aide to ask that he be allowed to advance to better ground. Lee sent back word that it was a matter of no consequence; he would provide for him later. But there was Colonel Jackson's regiment unaccountably moving forward, whilst he was halted, and growing impatient, he crossed the morass. Just then one of Lee's aides rode up shouting, "The British rear-guard is sure to be captured!" And a moment later, Lee himself, rode by, calling out gaily:

"My dear Marquis, I think those people are ours!"

They were comforting words; perhaps his suspicions had been ill founded; perhaps after all Lee meant business!

They were in sight of the enemy now; he sat and watched them through his glasses—the long dusty column, the lumbering baggage trains. And suddenly Clinton wheeled his rear-guard of Grenadiers to charge the Americans, and so force the flanking parties, that were torturing his column as badly as the Jersey mosquitoes that swarmed above it in clouds, to go to the rescue of Lee's main army. The Marquis saw through the manœuvre at once, and rode off to find Lee; when he came up, he asked Lee's permission to attack the British left. Lee scowled and turned his appalling beak of a nose towards him.

"You do not know British soldiers!" said Lee in his rude voice and rough manner. "We cannot stand against them. We shall certainly be driven back at first and we must be cautious."

The Marquis's cheeks flushed; he did not like to hear a commander talk this way in the face of the enemy.

"It may be so, Sir," he said, "but British soldiers have been beaten, and they may be again; at any rate, I am disposed to make the trial."

He rode back to his command, and a few moments later Hamilton, come straight from Lee, rode by with orders to the Marquis to take three regiments of Wayne's detachment then on the centre, and attack the British left.

He assembled this force, crossed the ravine, and emerging from a copse, formed near the wooden court house along a thick wood; on the right was the Middleton road, to the rear Freehold village, in front an open field; and the enemy in full view six hundred yards away.

At last! The Marquis, on his white horse, a mark for all of Clinton's guns, rode out in front of his troops to have a look for himself; an aide rode with him; they saw a British battery aiming a twelve-pounder at them. But a

general officer rode up, gave a command; the twelve-pounder was not fired. Some one said that it was Sir Henry Clinton himself. Was it really he? Had he recalled the meeting with La Fayette in London, at the French Embassy, the year before?

The Marquis rode back untouched, though the firing had begun, and men were falling all about him. He prepared to attack. . . . Then, suddenly, Lee's men bolted towards Freehold village, that is, to the rear. What did it mean? He saw an American battery retiring. Next, he discovered that he had but one regiment, the 4th New York Continental Infantry, under Colonel Livingston. Then some one said that orders were going forward to all the troops to post themselves farther back in the wood; Captain John Smith, of the 4th Virginia Continental Infantry, sent him word that General Scott's detachment had retired from the left flank. He was quite bewildered. . . . The British batteries were thundering now. . . .

Then in the confusion came young John Laurens with orders from Lee to retire; and the Marquis sent Jamair of his staff to tell the three regiments to fall back into an orchard on the right of Freehold. Then Captain Edwards of Lee's staff came; he must fall farther back. . . .

He fell back, sick at heart. All of his suspicions, then, were founded; Lee, whom he had narrowly watched all that morning, trying to believe in him, trying to support and obey him, Lee was what he had thought him. He sent an aide back to Washington to say that his presence was needed at the front.

Wayne galloped up, his perspiring face black with anger; he asked the Marquis what he was going to do with the troops; the Marquis told him that they were retiring by order of General Lee, but that he proposed to take up a

position at the court house. Wayne shook his head sardonically; did Wayne, too, understand the mystery?

Lee was at the village, directing the troops to fall still farther back. All the columns were in retreat now, and the Marquis found himself alone with Colonel Livingston's regiment a quarter of a mile beyond Freehold; helpless, he was caught up in the tide and borne along towards the rear, in the dust and sultry heat of noon, and the inferno of maddened, terror-stricken men in rout. The Grenadier Guards were at their heels. . . .

And then, suddenly, at a bridge two miles from Freehold, there was Washington, on a spent white horse, his red face shining with perspiration, his eyes blazing. The Marquis rode up to the General and told him what had happened. The New Jersey brigade was running along the Freehold and Englishtown turnpike, and suddenly, there behind them, at the head of a retreating column, with his crest-fallen and humiliated officers, came Lee himself. Washington reined in his horse, halted Lee with an imperious gesture, and demanded:

"By God, Sir, what is the meaning of this?"

Lee hung his head, hummed and hawed and began to stammer:

"Sir, Sir—"

"What is the meaning of this?" blazed Washington, the second time.

"You know, Sir," Lee somehow contrived to say, "that all this was against my advice."

The sudden and dramatic apparition checked the rout and hushed the noise of the retreat; a strained silence fell on the scene. The Marquis caught his breath, bit his lip; the officers, sitting their horses about, were strung up to an emotional pitch. The Marquis thought that Washington,

always a majestic figure on horseback, had never been so Olympian as he was that morning. He felt for him something like awe and adoration; the panting, terrified soldiers gaped on in wonder. Sterner with himself than anybody, more ruthless in ruling his own temper than in disciplining the army or attacking the enemy, Washington had kept his feelings hidden by a certain cold exterior; but now, his patience, tried for years by intrigue, gave way at last; his large eyes blazed, his bronzed face shone with the flaming light of his indignation and his wrath burst forth as though he would blast Lee. He swore magnificently, and with a gesture of scorn, waving his hand towards Englishtown, he gave him the most terrible command an officer can hear:

"Go to the rear, Sir!"

And then he himself began to reform the broken battalions. Spurring his horse along the column in retreat, he met Colonel Harrison of his own staff, riding to report that the British were coming on, fifteen minutes' march away. Washington called up Colonel Stewart and Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay and ordered them, with the reformed battalions, to hold a defile and check the British advance, and as Wayne appeared that moment out of the dust and turmoil, he turned this duty over to him, and, whirling his horse about, galloped back to bring up his main army, while Wayne held the defile. Once more back at the front, Washington formed his army on an eminence, a morass in front and heavy woods in his rear. He committed the subordinate commands this time to men whom he could trust—Lord Stirling, Nathanael Greene and the Marquis.

And there, in those marshes, on those desolate hills, in those woods of scrub-oak, he fought the battle of Monmouth.

The Guards and the Grenadiers under Cornwallis stubbornly charged again and again, swept by the fire of the batteries on the hills. They fought till evening, when Mad Anthony Wayne made a last charge and drove the British back beyond the narrow defile. It was night, and each army, too exhausted to do more, bivouacked on the field.

Washington and the Marquis lay down on the ground under a tree, covered themselves with the General's military cloak and talked about Lee. Dr. McHenry, the General's secretary, had seen Lee that evening at Kingstown, sitting on his horse, before the tavern, surrounded by a group of idle men, to whom he was explaining, explaining, explaining. . . . Washington and the Marquis lay there, the dead about them, and talked far into the summer night. . . . And while they and the tired army slept, Clinton and his Grenadiers slipped away in the moonlight.

XV

The army was on the march to White Plains, and in camp at Paramus, when an express from President Laurens announced that a French fleet had come to anchor in the Delaware. The news plunged the Marquis into a state of complex and conflicting emotions. He was in transports of joy at the thought of seeing Frenchmen fight against their hereditary enemy side by side with Americans, and felt that he had a "sort of moral mandate" to promote the alliance. But the prospect of being among his own countrymen roused his nationalistic pride and ambition; he longed to fight under his own flag, to distinguish himself in French eyes and win glory for France. This thought reawakened within him that concern about his own situation, compromised and anomalous ever since his formal

disobedience of the King's orders. And this made him suddenly homesick again. For some time, indeed, he had been thinking of going home. Embarrassed by the want of ready money, used to living on the grand and extravagant scale of a young nobleman and with no notion of economy, though he had tried hard to reduce his expenditures, he had been compelled to live on borrowed funds, had become the prey of money-lenders and, as the sprightly Beaumarchais put it, "found Jerusalem in New York." In a letter to the Duke d'Ayen, he had said, with an allusion to the miser in Molière's comedy: "I am going to add to my long epistle this soiled scrap of paper, such as Harpagon might have used, to tell you that I have grown very reasonable on the subject of my expenditures. As I have at present arranged my establishment, it is going to be more modest than ever, and really I conduct myself very wisely, considering how extremely dear everything is, principally with paper money." Francy had advanced him money, and Beaumarchais had written to Francy: "I approve what you have done for M. de La Fayette. Fine young man. I have not yet been paid the advances that you made him, but I am not worried."

He had, indeed, made an arrangement with Francy to return on the *Fier Rodrigue,* Beaumarchais's proudest ship, and had written to Francy: "I am infinitely flattered to go on a vessel of 52 guns and a crew of 500 men, which may pick up some English ships on the way. I have the greatest curiosity to see a naval combat, and it will be a charming occasion to see it in an agreeable manner." But his father-in-law, quite reconciled now that the escapade had turned out so well and reflected so much lustre on the house of Noailles, had advised him to remain.

The fleet was commanded by the Count d'Estaing du

Gaillans, a distant cousin of the Marquis, and, like him, an Auvergnat. He was not a sailor, but a soldier, veteran of the Seven Years' War, with the rank of lieutenant-general. He was about fifty years old, and a favourite of the King, who, in detailing him to the command of the fleet, compensated his want of naval experience by conferring upon him the title of Vice-Admiral in the Seas of Asia and America. He had twelve ships of the line and fourteen frigates, the commanders of which, by professional solidarity, were united in jealousy against him because he was not a sailor. He had on board his flagship, the *Languedoc,* two important passengers, one, Conrad Alexandre Gérard de Rayneval, Vergennes's right-hand man at the Foreign Office, coming out as the first French Minister plenipotentiary to the United States, and Silas Deane, victim of the hatred of Arthur Lee and John Adams, on his way home to face charges before Congress. The fleet had been three months on the way, and when he dropped anchor in the Delaware, the British fleet had sailed for New York. Setting Gérard and Deane ashore, Estaing put out to sea again and sailed round to Sandy Hook.

When Washington told him that he was sending young John Laurens to the fleet with letters, the Marquis at once wrote to the Admiral. His letter was long and full of the exuberance of his French nature, which now flared up triumphantly after months of repression in the society of the reserved Washington.

It is with a very lively pleasure, Monsieur le Comte [he began], that I learn of the arrival of a French fleet on the coast of America; I have no less pleasure in learning that you command it, and this last promises me a greater one still, that of hearing the news of a victory, more interesting, I believe, in this conjuncture than ever victory could be. I love to think that you will deliver

the first blows to an insolent nation because I know that you relish the pleasure of humiliating it and that you know it well enough to hate it. I have the honour to be united to you by this sentiment as well as by the ties of blood and our common title of Auvergnats, and there are no motives in the world that do not unite to make me desire your success with an ardour that it is impossible to express. . . .

May you, Monsieur le Comte, defeat them, sink them to the bottom, lay them as low as they have been insolent! May you begin the great work of destruction that will put their nation under the feet of our own; may you prove to them, at their cost, what a Frenchman can do—a Frenchman from Auvergne; may you do them as much harm as they wish us, is the sincere wish of him who, in begging your pardon for the length of his letter, has the honour to be with the greatest desire of deserving some part of your sentiment, and with the most respectful attachment, Monsieur le Comte, your very humble and very obedient servant.

He took his letter to headquarters and showed it to Washington. Nobody but a Frenchman could have written it; but, lest Estaing should not recognize this inherent proof of its genuineness, and the authenticity of the dispatches that he was sending by young Laurens, the General, in his cautious way, made the Marquis add a postscript that would set at rest any doubts. Under Washington's eyes, then, the Marquis wrote:

General Washington desires that I give you some sign by which you may recognize the authenticity of this message. I do not believe that you know my handwriting, but, when I speak to you of our estates in Auvergne, of my *château* of Chavaniac, of the fine domain of Pont du Château and of the splendid trout-fishing of Monsieur de Montboissier; when I speak to you of Madame de Chavaniac and of Mesdemoiselles du Motier, my aunts, and of the marriage of my cousin to Monsieur d'Abos, these little family details will cause you to recognize me as a true Auvergnat. I wish also that you would shortly acquaint me

with your handwriting or with some cipher that will prevent our falling into a trap. . . . How fortunate it would be for me to find at last a chance to shed my blood for my country and to be avowed by her! I am going to finish this enormous epistle by signing my name in full.

GILBERT DU MOTIER MS. DE LAFAYETTE

The army moved on, and three days later they camped at Haverstraw Bay. Then, on the 17th, a young aide of Estaing, Major de Choin, arrived at camp with letters from Estaing; he had not seen Laurens; Estaing had sent Choin ashore on the day that he had sailed out of the Delaware, and he had been nine days in finding his way to headquarters. Washington had a warm welcome for him, and showed him every polite attention. The Marquis embraced him—and wrote more long letters to the Admiral, to be carried by Hamilton with Washington's greetings and plans for the campaign. Washington favoured an attack on New York, but, if that could not be undertaken, he wished the fleet to go to Rhode Island, where he thought the English had five or six frigates and three or four thousand men. There General Sullivan, with the Northern militia, would second him.

Washington promised to send pilots to take the fleet up the bay; they were to follow Hamilton. But pilots willing to risk their skins under the guns of the British fleet were not easy to find; besides, the competent ones were making a good thing by serving the British, who paid them in gold. They found the pilot who had taken Lord Howe's fleet into the harbour; but when he was brought to camp he refused to go; he was not feeling well. The Marquis tried his powers on him, offered him any sum he might name, but he shook his head. It was humiliating to the Marquis, with young Choin standing by, looking on at all this with

a cynical eye. If the pilot was ill, Choin wished that he had the same malady.

However, the prayers of the Marquis and the insistence of the generals—not to speak of fifty thousand *écus*—won over the famous pilot; and he was to leave in a gig that would convey him to the sea, and so "the precious invalid," as Choin called him, set out at last.

Meanwhile, Estaing was cruising off Sandy Hook, exposed to rough weather, with no good anchorage ground, and a sand-bar closing the harbour. His fleet was in a bad way. His supply of water was almost exhausted, his flour mildewing, his provisions spoiling and scurvy had broken out among the crews. Behind the bar lay the English ships; he could see the flags and pennants flying from their mastheads, and as he and his staff officers watched them through their glasses, they thought that they could detect signs of disorder, for they were short of crews, and it was reported that press-gangs had been sent into the streets of New York. It was the moment to attack. Then a boat sent by Congress came alongside, with news that a British squadron under Admiral Lord Byron was arriving. English cavalry and infantry patrolled the coast; the landing was difficult and dangerous; but he must have water, and finally, in desperation, and rather than order any one to take the risk, he went ashore himself in a heavy sea, and succeeded in making a landing at the mouth of the Shrewsbury River, losing the lives of one officer and several sailors. On shore he was found by young Laurens, with the letters from Washington and the Marquis.

Then Hamilton came, accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury, and at last the famous pilot arrived, but once on board he declared that it was impossible for ships of such draught with their guns aboard to enter the bay.

Estaing, though thinking it "terrible to be in sight of your object and yet unable to reach it," reluctantly concluded that the pilot was right, and on July 23 set sail for Rhode Island, having lost eleven precious days. He arrived off Rhode Island on July 29, and came to anchor outside of Brenton's Ledge, five miles below Newport. There he found that the British forces on Rhode Island consisted not of four thousand but of six thousand men, under Major-General Pigot, the main body of them entrenched at Newport. In addition to this, the English had a force of fifteen hundred Germans on Canonicut Island, across the main channel to the west. The three passages from the sea were guarded by small frigates. Pigot was in a tight place; with their superior force, the French could have destroyed the English frigates and captured the Germans on Canonicut, and, if the Americans had been ready to aid them, compelled the surrender of Newport. But Sullivan was not ready, and thus Estaing lost "the most favourable of days, the precious moment of arrival, in which, struck with astonishment, the enemy cannot often resist." He was ready to land three thousand men, infantry and marines, but Sullivan asked for delay; those militiamen whose terms of enlistment had expired, had gone home; the new levies had not yet been mobilized. Revolutionary leaders were raising free companies, but Choin was sceptical, and put Estaing on his guard. "M. Hancock, old, gouty, infirm, animated only by the energy of the spirit, arrives at the head of a company of volunteers, and says, better than Sophronius, 'No, pain, thou art nothing, when thou separatest me from glory!' His example and his heroism have not had all the effect that I hoped, for the honour of the American souls. On land as on sea, *mon Général,* great souls have more admirers than imitators." The figures

given to him would have no reality; "3,000 to-day would be 300 to-morrow, and in any case only half as much on ground as on paper."

The Marquis had conceived the idea of commanding the French troops that would be landed for the attack on Newport, and in his letters to the Admiral he had tucked in hints of it. Estaing replied with eulogies of the Marquis as effusive as his own, and held out the prospect of his fighting with the French infantry.

Meanwhile the Marquis had been begging Washington to allow him to take part in the expedition, and on the 22nd, the General placed under his command a force of twenty-eight hundred of his best troops, and ordered him to Providence, where he was to "subject himself to the orders of Major-General Sullivan, who will have command of the expedition against Newport."

The Marquis's joy overflowed in another long letter to Estaing; he was a Frenchman now.

You have overwhelmed me with joy, Monsieur le Comte, in flattering me with the hope of fighting with the infantry that you have on board. Nothing that has ever been announced to me, since I have been on earth, has given me more pleasure. It is with this flattering thought that I set out, and I am full of the other thought of meriting the friendship and esteem of our brave and dear compatriots. Never, Monsieur le Comte, have I so fully appreciated the charms of our calling as since I have been permitted to exercise it with the French. Never have I so much longed for the talents that I lack and the experience that I shall have acquired twenty years from now, if God saves my life and keeps us at war. You must find it very ridiculous to see me a kind of general-officer; for I admit that I can not keep from laughing at it myself, in a country where they do not laugh so much as in our own.

In the name of your own love of glory do not begin before we arrive. . . . I avow that if I were to arrive too late I should wish

to hang myself. . . . I love you tenderly, Monsieur le Comte; you are the man I wish to see at the head of this squadron, and the man who pleases my heart.

The troops were sent on ahead, and on the evening of the 23rd, the Marquis bade Washington good-bye and set out, with his staff, Gimat, Gouvion, Nevill and Pontgibaud, to overtake his command. Wherever they halted along the road he wrote another gushing letter to Estaing and sent an aide galloping on ahead with it.

He arrived at Providence on August 4, eager to go at once on board and embrace the Admiral. The Admiral was as eager as he, but his position was of a certain delicacy; there were those old *lettres de cachet,* those orders to all ships in the King's navy to arrest the Marquis wherever found and to convey him back to France. The Marquis perceived the Admiral's embarrassment, and in an effort to regularize his situation wrote a letter informing the Minister of War of his whereabouts and of his desire to remain so long as the Count d'Estaing was there. In asking the Count to forward this letter with the dispatches of the fleet to Paris, he wrote: "This formula appears all the more necessary to me since in coming here I could avail myself only of a tacit consent, and even that was so very tacit that it was couched without any hidden conditions in the form of a most express prohibition." But the Admiral and the Marquis could not concert their plans through intermediaries; it was essential that they meet. And so the Marquis decided to board the *Languedoc.* He rode down from Providence; the fog of the early morning had lifted, and in a sudden burst of sunlight, he saw the French fleet. He went on board accompanied by Gimat and Fleury and Pontgibaud and several other French officers, and the Admiral on his quarter-deck embraced him and gave him

the accolade. Then they retired to the Admiral's cabin and Estaing informed him that he was to have the command of the landing party of French infantry. He had never been so happy in his life; he spent a delightful day on board, dined with the Admiral and his staff and at five o'clock in the afternoon, when he went over the side, the crew gave him three cheers.

The next day General Greene arrived from White Plains with a letter from Washington. Greene was a native of Rhode Island, and unable to forego the prospect of distinguishing himself in the eyes of the people at home, had importuned Washington to give him a command. Washington had yielded; all the American troops were to be divided between Greene and himself. The Marquis gave in with his usual grace.

Estaing had already lost nine days and had not even succeeded in supplying the needs of his fleet; they were still unable to get drinking water, and the Admiral had been forced to ration the small supply remaining in the butts. But Sullivan asked for more time; the New England militia were slow in arriving, and when they came, they proved to be, not the fourteen thousand that Sullivan had told the Admiral he could count on, but eight thousand in all. And what militia! The French officers could only laugh at them. "They do not march here in armies," observed Choin in his sarcastic way, "but in Tartar hordes." Pontgibaud had never seen a sight more comical. "All the tailors and all the apothecaries must have responded to the call; one recognized them by their round wigs, nearly all miserably mounted, wearing game-bags as shoulder-belts. I judged that those warriors there were not coming to see the enemy too close, but to help eat up our victuals; I was not mistaken; they disappeared in abundance."

Sullivan kept on asking for delay, and the attack was postponed day after day. To make matters worse, the usual jealousies and envies developed; Sullivan, ostentatious and vain, rather noisy and ill-bred, a politician and not a soldier, was eager to obtain all the credit of victory. Greene was anxious to distinguish himself in the eyes of the old folks at home, and the Marquis, with his love of glory, now that he was to command French troops, was in a state bordering on exaltation. The smart young French officers looked on the Americans with supercilious contempt; the Americans resented the airs the French could not help giving themselves, and, in short, they were divided by that antagonism which always bristles between the soldiers of allied armies.

And, as the Americans now looked upon the Marquis as a Frenchman, and the Frenchmen considered him an American, a great deal of this hatred was visited upon him. His meteoric rise to popularity in America, the place he had won in the affections of Washington and in the hearts of the people, had not failed already to excite envy in the minds of other generals who had a desire for glory as keen as his, but no such romantic legend, and no such charm to help them realize it. Sullivan did not like the idea of the Marquis's commanding the French troops; he feared that the Marquis would win too many laurels. Even Greene, to whom the Marquis had gracefully yielded the half of his command, was opposed to the plan. Young Laurens, too, was jealous of the Marquis, and in the reports that he was always writing to his father, the President of Congress, referred to him with scorn and dislike. Sullivan proposed to land American troops "on the East side of Rhode Island under cover of the fire of three French frigates"; after the American troops had landed, the French troops could join

them. But the Marquis objected to this plan on the ground that the French would play thereby a secondary and humiliating part; the pride of the French nation would never suffer that.

Sullivan expected the Count d'Estaing to command his landing party under him, but as Estaing happened to be admiral of the fleet, his place was on his flagship. And the Marquis was kept dashing back and forth between the *Languedoc* and Providence, settling nice points of honour and precedence, accommodating one side to the punctilios of the other, writing voluminous letters to the Admiral, deciding which was to land first, and how and when and where the attack was to be made. At last an agreement was reached; the French fleet was to enter the middle channel on Saturday the 8th in order to be ready to co-operate with Sullivan's forces; on Monday the 10th, French and American troops were to land on the island simultaneously and as equals. It was all understood, agreed to, written out and signed; everything at last was ready.

On Saturday, August 8, Estaing, with eight ships of the line, brilliantly ran the batteries on Rhode Island, and anchored in the northern end of the channel. But Sullivan had not waited, as he had agreed, and had already secretly landed two thousand men in Rhode Island. Estaing was dumbfounded; the breach of faith touched his pride, and as the news spread through the fleet, the officers were in a fury, and roundly denounced the action of Sullivan as an insult to the dignity of France and the fleet of the King. Sullivan tried to explain; General Pigot, on seeing the French fleet come up the channel, had withdrawn the British troops from the fortifications at the head of the island, and Sullivan had decided to occupy their abandoned positions. He had not been able, however, to take any

artillery or ammunition with him, and, in short, would the Admiral kindly come to his relief?

Estaing admirably restrained his feelings, indulged in no reproaches, and gave orders at once that troops be sent to Rhode Island to support Sullivan. Then, suddenly, the fog lifted, and the look-out at the main-truck of the *Languedoc* called out that he saw sails making for the entrance to the port. The Admiral and his officers seized their glasses, looked out to sea, and there, indistinct in the lifting fog, was the British fleet.

All afternoon the French ships were coming to their posts; night fell, cloudy and threatening, with dashes of rain. The wind was shifting to the north-east. The Marquis hardly slept that night; he was up early on Monday morning and down at the shore, with Gouvion, Gimat, Pontgibaud and a crowd of officers. The sky was cloudy, the sea sullen and calm. Several of the ships were still working to their posts. At seven o'clock the wind rose and hauled round to north-north-east; the sky cleared; the day would be fine after all. At half-past seven signal flags were fluttering from the mast of the *Languedoc;* the fleet was clearing for action. A small boat was bobbing over the rising waves; the Marquis's aide-de-camp was coming ashore to tell General Sullivan that after disposing of the British fleet Estaing would return to help him finish the siege of Newport. The Admiral abandoned his small boats at eight o'clock, signalled the fleet to form in line of battle and at half-past eight cut the cables and ran the batteries, much better served that morning, and gave them broadsides as they passed. By eleven o'clock the last of the line had passed the point of Brenton reef; they stood out to sea, and bore down on the British fleet.

From the shores the English and American armies looked

on. And the Marquis had never been so proud in his life as when he saw the British fleet, under full sail, in the brilliant sunshine and the brisk north wind, running away, and the French fleet giving chase.

XVI

The next day a terrible storm swept the islands and raged for three days, blowing down the tents of the army, and pelting the troops with rain. At headquarters they were all anxious about the French fleet, and posted look-outs along the shore. They waited impatiently. A week went by without news.

Then, on Thursday morning, August 30, ten days after the fleet had sailed away so gallantly, a party of American officers on Point Judith, looking out to sea, saw a sail; a small frigate was standing in, and, within a mile and a half of shore, she hove to and dropped a small boat. It came on, grounded on the beach, and a young ensign leapt out, the Count de Cambis, of the Admiral's staff. The ship was the British frigate *Senegal,* captured by the French, with a prize crew on board under the Count's command. The news that the young ensign bore added another chapter to the monotonous tale of that ill luck which had pursued Estaing ever since he set sail for America. All day Monday, and all Monday night he continued his long stern chase of the British fleet; on Tuesday, with the wind in his favour, about four o'clock in the afternoon, he overhauled them. Lord Howe, seeing that he could no longer avoid an engagement, prepared to defend himself against an overwhelmingly superior force. Drums beat to quarters. The French opened fire, and the murderous combat had just begun, when suddenly the sky darkened, the sea rose

and a furious gale burst upon them, scattering both fleets. The storm raged all night long. In the morning the superb flagship, the *Languedoc,* her bowsprit snapped off, her main topmast and mizzen-mast gone by the board, her rudder unshipped, was rolling helplessly in the trough of the heavy seas. The gale was howling more fiercely, and the sea rising all the while; it was impossible to work the ship, and they rolled in the trough of the waves all that night. The next afternoon the gale diminished, the sea went down and then the British ship *Renown* appeared, raked the helpless *Languedoc* fore and aft with the fire of twenty-five guns, then unaccountably drew off. The next morning the damaged fleet began to assemble, and three days later all the ships had reported except the *Cæsar.* They had two prizes. With the flagship in tow of two other vessels, the Admiral gave orders to return to Newport. To this course his fleet captains were opposed; his sealed orders for such an emergency were to go to Boston. He held a council of war and the officers insisted, unanimously, that the fleet go into Boston for repairs. Nevertheless the Admiral sent Cambis with a letter to General Sullivan informing him that in pursuance of his promise he was coming back to Rhode Island, even though the condition of his fleet obliged him to sail immediately for Boston.

When Sullivan received this letter he flew into a rage. During those ten days he had made no progress with his siege, though each day he had written to Washington that he was going to capture the forts on the next. With "his well directed fire and his batteries within half a pistol shot of the enemy" he would force them to surrender, and "if the English could resist his fire they would be salamanders." He wrote to Estaing, imploring him to join in an attack. The Admiral replied that, with his disabled fleet, and the

King's orders to repair to Boston in case of disaster, it was impossible. As it was, he had come only "to fulfil the promise verbally made, that in any event I would return to you, dead or alive."

Then Sullivan turned to the Marquis and begged him to dissuade the Admiral; Sullivan promised water, fresh provisions, trees for new masts—everything. The Marquis took General Greene and several officers, went on board the *Languedoc* and pleaded with the Admiral for an hour, pointing out that the departure would be regarded by the Americans as a retreat, and produce a deplorable effect. And Estaing summoned his fleet captains aboard the flagship and held another council of war.

The council decided that, in its crippled state, the fleet could not wait. Besides, the captains of the *Fantasque* and the *Sagittaire* had seen a strange English man-of-war, a three-decker, which must belong to Admiral Byron's squadron.

The Marquis then asked the Admiral to land at least six hundred marines to be joined to the Americans, and Estaing said that he would land twelve hundred if the Marquis could assure him that Newport could be taken in two days. But the Marquis could not promise that. Sullivan begged the Marquis to try once more. The Marquis, with some embarrassment, wrote again. Greene wrote, and Hancock wrote, and they sent off the letters to the fleet. But the fleet had gone.

Sullivan would not believe it at first, but when he was convinced that the Admiral had put to sea he raved with anger. He drew up a long document, in his best legal style, protesting "in the most solemn manner," against Estaing's conduct, "as derogatory to the honour of France, contrary to the intentions of His Most Christian Majesty

and the interests of his nation, and destructive in the highest degree to the welfare of the United States of America, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations."

Then he called a council of the general officers, the Marquis among them, and read out his protest to them. Before he had done the Marquis's hand had flown to the hilt of his sword, and he sprang up in a rage.

"You have shown a lack of delicacy in calling me into your council," he blazed, "and I shall use none in my expressions. I resent these imputations as personal insults; I would have you all understand that France is dearer to me than America; that whatever France does is always right; the Count d'Estaing is my friend and I am ready to maintain these sentiments with my sword; it could never be better employed!"

They all made excuses, begged his pardon and said that nothing had been farther from their thoughts than to ask him to join them in the protest.

But his anger and sense of outrage only increased; he could scarcely control himself, and rather than go about with his hand on his sword-hilt, ready to resent insults, he withdrew to his quarters, gathered the French officers about him, and kept out of the way of every one.

The other generals, however, signed the protest, and Sullivan charged young Laurens with the inelegant mission of delivering it to the Count d'Estaing in person. An American sloop was placed at Laurens's disposition, and, as highly wrought up as any of them, Laurens sailed away after the Admiral, overhauled him just as the fleet was about to enter Boston Harbour, boarded the flagship and presented the protest.

"The queer colonel-bailiff of General Sullivan was re-

ceived coldly, but politely," wrote Estaing. "I contented myself with requesting him to report to his General that I had read his writing with great calmness." The Admiral ordered wine and refreshments to be served to the men on Laurens's boat, and went on into port.

Then Sullivan took a step that roused the militia, worked up the newspapers of Providence and Boston, excited the people to a kind of madness and let loose upon the French a storm worse than that which had broken upon the fleet a fortnight before. He took up his ready pen—as though there were not already enough trouble in the world!—and issued an order of the day. In it he lamented the departure of the French fleet, and added that he hoped the event would "prove America able to procure with her own arms that which her allies refused to assist her in obtaining." The troops turned into a mob; the infection spread to the people; all the racial prejudices of the Anglo-Saxon nature were aroused; the French were abused as a degenerate, rickety race, frivolous, effeminate, always dancing. The Tories looked on at the quarrel between the allies with delight, and taunted the patriots with the desertion of the "frog-eating gentry now capering through your provinces." It was even proposed to deny the French fleet a refuge in Boston Harbour.

Sullivan's order wrought the Marquis up into a frenzy. He rushed at once to headquarters, and demanded that the offensive words be retracted. Sullivan's swarthy face turned darker still with rage; his black eyes flashed, his black, moist curls shook; there were high words and a quarrel, and the Marquis strode away angrier than ever. A few hours later Sullivan, still in a fury, came to the Marquis's headquarters, and the quarrel between the hot-headed Irishman and the hot-headed Frenchman flared up worse than

ever; the Marquis threatened to challenge Sullivan to a duel; Sullivan said that he would welcome such a challenge.

Sullivan went away and left the Marquis to his anger. Should he send Gimat to him with a challenge? He and Sullivan had been good friends ever since Brandywine. Then Sullivan wrote another order of the day, explaining and softening down the first. It was not a very handsome apology, but it served to patch up the quarrel. The Marquis, who felt that he had risked his popularity—and what greater sacrifice could he make for his country?—shut himself up and began a letter to Washington, so long that it took him two days to finish it; in it he reviewed the whole unlucky chapter, defended Estaing and told what he himself had done.

"Whenever I quit you I meet with some disappointment and misfortune. I did not need it to desire seeing you as much as possible."

Sullivan and Greene and Hancock—now a general himself—were holding councils daily, and the Marquis was gratified to observe that they were troubled by the embarrassing position they had got themselves into by signing the flamboyant protest. He avoided them as much as he could, and when he attended their councils he sat silent and cold. They asked him to go to Boston and straighten the business out for them, but he refused, and when he was not in the trenches with his men, stayed in his quarters writing letters. He wrote to his friends in Congress, to General Heath commanding at Boston—and of course to Estaing. He wrote with the particularity of an old minister of foreign affairs transmitting to his ambassadors in foreign capitals instructions that would avert a war. And he displayed no small diplomacy. He told the Admiral how to

manage Gérard, whom he considered too solemn and pompous, advised him to write to Washington also, "a long letter in which you can slip a few words of regret at not having co-operated with him." John Hancock was leaving for Boston; "it is a jesuitical act, but he is a man all powerful at Boston; his zeal for France, joined to the small liking he shows for English bullets, moves him to go to offer you his services; I am giving him a letter of recommendation which flatters his self-esteem and may cause him to give us proofs of that popularity which he has obtained and which he is very glad to parade."

Washington sent a soothing letter to Estaing, and wrote to the Marquis: "Let me beseech you, therefore, my good Sir, to afford a healing hand to the wound, that unintentionally has been made."

A word from Washington was enough for the Marquis, and when Sullivan, still in a tight place on Rhode Island, asked him to go to Boston to urge the Massachusetts authorities to expedite the repairs of the fleet, and to beg the Count d'Estaing to send French troops, he consented. It was seventy miles to Boston and he rode the distance in seven hours. He stayed in Boston long enough to attend a banquet given to Estaing and the officers of his fleet by the Council of Massachusetts, and to take part in a conference between the Council and the Admiral. The authorities promised aid, and Estaing was ready with a *beau geste;* he was ready to take all his available land forces, place himself at their head and serve under Sullivan. Even the members of the Council protested that it was too much; that it was beneath the dignity of an admiral of the fleet to command a small detachment under a major-general. But the chivalrous Estaing insisted; he was ready gaily to

pretend to himself "that he was an American Colonel" and to serve under General Sullivan "as I formerly did under Marshal Saxe in the war that ended in 1748."

The Marquis started back to Rhode Island on the afternoon of the 30th, galloped the whole seventy miles in six hours and a half, and reached Howland's Ferry at eleven o'clock that night, just in time to find Sullivan's army retiring from the island to the mainland.

The British had attacked on the day before and had been driven back, but that morning a letter from Washington had informed Sullivan that Howe had left New York with troops to relieve the garrison at Newport and the news had decided Sullivan to retire.

When the Marquis arrived, a thousand men still remained on the island, entangled with parties of the enemy. Mortified by the thought that an action should have taken place in his absence, he asked for the command of the rear-guard, and though worn out with the fatigue of his dash to Boston and back, he took charge, and drew them off to the last picket, without losing a man. He was the last man to leave the island; he crossed the ferry in the last boat, and at midnight the whole army was safe on the mainland at Tiverton.

Every one drew a sigh of relief; Sullivan mentioned the Marquis in his dispatches, and Congress tendered him a vote of thanks. Washington, who set the ideals of a gentleman above all other standards of conduct, was touched by Estaing's chivalrous gesture and wrote to him a grave, lofty and consoling letter which Estaing prized above all the others.

And so, with compliments all around, ended the expedition against Newport.

XVII

The Marquis was at Bristol in command of the troops nearest Rhode Island, but as that position was exposed and in a *cul-de-sac* he obtained from Washington, going over the head of Sullivan with whom he was never on very good terms after their quarrel, leave to transfer his troops to Warren. General Greene had said that "the Marquis's thirst for glory and national attachment often run him into error," and he himself had admitted to Washington that "whenever I quit you, I meet with some disappointment and misfortune." It had been his fate in the wild-goose chase to Canada, and in the adventure of Barren Hill; without the sober judgment of Washington to guide him, his impetuous nature was pretty apt to get him into trouble. And now that he was separated from his friend and mentor, and had nothing to do, he began to fret with impatience and to long for some action of éclat. Ever since the arrival of the French fleet he had been in a feverish and exalted state of mind. He had expected his compatriots to illuminate the world with the brilliancy of the arms of France, and fairly to stun the Americans with her glory. His pride had been wounded and his disappointment was immense, and as he restlessly paced the floor of his quarters at Warren in those autumn days, he imagined a thousand heroic rôles in which he might make the impression that the fleet had failed to produce. His thoughts turned once more to the old project of invading Canada, of wresting the French provinces from the English and turning them over to the Americans with a magnificent generosity of which no nation on this planet has ever yet been capable. He did not at once mention it to Washington, but he proposed it to Estaing, in whose mind, so much like the Marquis's

own, it promptly found favour. "I should like to serve under your orders and with you to undertake some expedition that could heighten the glory of the French arms and shut the mouths of the envious. . . . I think of nothing but the happiness of being reunited with you, of Halifax capitulating, St. Augustin taken, the English islands in flames, and everybody admitting that nothing can resist Frenchmen. . . ."

Meanwhile, however, and until perfidious Albion could be reduced to this humiliating state, an incident occurred in which the Marquis thought he saw his chance. The English commissioners had continued their efforts at conciliation, and Lord Carlisle had published an address to Congress in which he had accused the French nation of "a perfidy too universally acknowledged to require any new proof."

This was not to be borne; the honour of the nation was involved; the Marquis determined to challenge Lord Carlisle. He wrote to Estaing:

I am going to write him a *billet doux* and propose to him an exemplary punishment in full view of the American and English armies. I have nothing to do here that is very interesting and, while killing Lord Carlisle, I can at the same time transact more important business at White Plains. I flatter myself that General Washington will not disapprove of this proposition and I am sure that it will have a good effect in America.

He wrote as well to Washington, though in another tone, to ask his advice, that is, his consent. Then, without waiting for a reply, he sent a letter, in French, to Lord Carlisle:

I had believed, until this day, Milord, that all my business with you would be transacted with your generals and I hoped to see them only at the head of the troops respectively confided

to us; your letter to the Congress of the United States, with its insulting phrase for my country, which you have signed, alone could give me anything to settle with you. I do not deign to refute it, Milord, but I desire to punish it. It is you, as head of the commission, whom I summon to give me reparation for it, in a manner as public as the offence and as the denial that shall follow it. M. de Gimat, a French officer, will make for me such arrangements as may be agreeable to you. . . . As for me, Milord, anything will suit me, provided that to the glorious privilege of being French, I may join that of proving to a man of vour nation that no one with impunity attacks my own.

LAFAYETTE

However, the idea of a spectacular duel between two noblemen, with the two hostile armies drawn up to look on, did not appeal to the practical and realistic Washington as it should, and he wrote to the Marquis disapproving the cartel.

The generous spirit of chivalry, exploded by the rest of the world, finds a refuge, my dear friend, in the sensibility of your nation only. But it is in vain to cherish it, unless you can find antagonists to support it; and however well adapted it might have been to the times in which it existed, in our days it is to be feared, that your opponent, sheltering himself behind modern opinions, and under his present public character of commissioner, would turn a virtue of such ancient date into ridicule. Besides, supposing his Lordship accepted your terms, experience has proved that chance is often as much concerned in deciding these matters as bravery; and always more than the justice of the cause. I would not therefore have your life by the remotest possibility exposed, when it may be reserved for so many greater occasions.

Estaing, for once, disappointed him; he did not rise to the occasion at all—and he had thought the Admiral was such a gallant man! Instead, he actually appealed to Washington to forbid the duel. However, Gimat had borne the

challenge, and the Marquis could only wait. After an exasperating delay a reply came. His lordship was slightly ironical:

> Sir,—I have received your letter by the hand of M. de Gimat; I confess that I find it difficult to make a serious reply. The only one, as you must have foreseen, that can be expected of me in my quality of commissioner of the King, is that I consider myself and shall always consider myself as not being obliged to respond to any individual for my public conduct or for my way of expressing myself. I owe that only to my country and my King. . . . I must remind you that the insult to which you refer in the correspondence that has taken place between the Commissioners of the King and the Congress is not of a private nature. Therefore I think that all these national disputes will be best decided when Admiral Byron and the Count d'Estaing meet each other.

Nevertheless, the Marquis, not having reached the age when men philosophically grow less eager to fight, was proud of what he had done, and felt that he had added to his popularity. All the French officers, especially those of his own staff, approved and applauded. The people seemed rather to enjoy this picturesque swashbuckling on the part of their romantic young paladin. It was all very well for the grave Washington to say that the practice of duelling had been "exploded"; as a matter of fact duels were being fought constantly under his very nose; and he doubtless thought none the less of those who fought them. The first thing an Excellency of his years and position must do was to set a good example; he discountenanced duelling, just as he did swearing against which very prevalent practice he issued an order, though, like all gentlemen, English or colonial, he swore himself when occasion required. Had not Cadwalader, in Washington's defence, shot Conway in

a duel? And did not young Laurens, of his own staff, fight with Charles Lee—who had been tried by court-martial and suspended from the army for a year—and send a bullet whistling through his clothes? At about the same time Laurens's father, the President of Congress, fought a duel with Penn—not one of the Quakers, but a delegate from North Carolina—over something said in Congress. Gérard, though a Frenchman himself, was shocked, and reported the matter to Versailles so that his government might "judge of the morals of the country." But he did not report on the Marquis's challenge to the Earl of Carlisle.

The episode of the duel, however, was a mere interlude; the Marquis was writing daily letters to the Admiral, dangling before his eyes the prospect of glory in the conquest of Canada, and, before long, the greater glory of an invasion of England.

The news from France of the action of the *Belle Poule* with the *Arethusa,* on June 18, and the battle off Ushant between Admiral d'Orvilliers and Admiral Keppel on July 27, inflamed him still more; the report, or the rumour of it, in crossing the sea, had got itself greatly exaggerated, as rumours in war time always do, and swollen into a crushing defeat of a large English fleet. He was now eager to sail for home with Estaing and invade England. "In any case I pray you to take me with you, Monsieur le Comte, my heart loves to attach itself to your fortune, and I hope that you will not oppose the attraction that draws me towards you. . . . If they went there without me I would hang myself. I would rather be a soldier there than a general anywhere else, and the bearskin of a grenadier would be the height of my ambition, provided I had the pleasure of seeing a lovely fire at London."

But letters, even such long and effusive letters as those

he wrote every day to the Admiral would no longer suffice to express such boiling enthusiasm, and on September 25, he galloped off to Boston to see Estaing. The five days that he spent in Boston were filled with long conferences with the Admiral on board the *Languedoc,* with efforts, aided by Dr. Cooper, a Presbyterian minister, to allay the passions aroused by the killing of the Chevalier de Saint Sauveur, an officer of the fleet, by a Boston mob, and with interviews in town with Hancock who, carried away by the Marquis's infectious enthusiasm, assured him that the States would be happy to furnish troops for the Canadian expedition. He decided to go to Philadelphia to discuss the enterprise with Congress, and wrote to Sullivan for leave, but receiving no reply determined in his indisciplinable impetuosity to go without it.

The animosities aroused by the quarrel at Rhode Island were still smouldering, and Estaing was still smarting with resentment. Congress had as yet done nothing to soothe his wounded pride, and as such bodies never spontaneously recognize merit, and do so only when impelled by some private interest, the Marquis expected to do a bit of lobbying while he was in Philadelphia.

But there was one other subject of discussion that was nearer to the Marquis's heart just then than any other, unless it was the subject of invading Canada and England, and that was the thought of going home. It had been long on his mind, and the association with the French officers, the sight of men from his own land, the accents of his own language, had made him homesick. France had resumed first place in his affections, and the disappointment and the wound to his pride resulting from the fiasco at Rhode Island, had somewhat disillusioned him.

He wrote to Adrienne:

At last, my dear heart, the glad moment approaches when I shall go to rejoin you, and next winter will see me happily reunited to all that I love. . . . Half of the Americans say that I love my country furiously, and the other half that, since the arrival of the French vessels I have gone mad, and that I only drink and eat and sleep in accordance with the direction of the wind. Between you and me, they are somewhat right; I have never felt so strongly the sense of national pride.

On his way to Philadelphia the Marquis stopped at Fishkill and spent a day—October 6—with Washington at headquarters. He wished to discuss with him the Canadian project, for when once he got an idea into his head, there was no way to get it out. It was hard to talk to the General about it; the large blue eyes were cold and glassy when Canada was mentioned. Washington had written to him only ten days before that if he thought of making "this winter a visit to your court, to your wife, to your friends, and if you hesitate for fear of missing an expedition to Canada, friendship compels me to advise you that I do not believe the thing probable enough to cause you to change your plans."

The General had not altered his opinion, and was willing, or somewhat more than willing, just then, for the Marquis to absent himself for a while, for so much ebullience and enthusiasm were trying at times to his reticence, and his own affection for the Marquis made his other officers jealous. But the question of his return to France was not so simple at that moment as it seemed. It had already been published abroad that the Marquis was disillusioned and disgusted, and eager to leave America. He had become an international figure, and political significance attached to his slightest movements; if he left America for good, his departure would be attributed to disgust. Washington advised him,

therefore, merely to ask for a furlough. The Marquis pressed on to Philadelphia where he arrived on October 13, and wrote to Congress in this sense. "I dare flatter myself that I schall be look'd on as a soldier on furlough, who most heartily wants to join again his colours, and his most esteemed and belov'd fellow-soldiers."

At Philadelphia, though he wrote to Adrienne that he "felt like a prisoner in this dreary city," he plunged into those feverish exertions and dissipations that swirl about all political assemblies. Dinners, wine, late hours, long sessions in stuffy committee rooms, hours spent in buttonholing members—these things wore him out. He had his furlough to arrange, and the interests of the Admiral and the fleet to protect. He saw much of Gérard and came to have a better opinion of him. Gérard might be pompous, but that impressed congressmen. And Gérard had a way with them; he got what he wanted. His long experience in the Foreign Office had left him no illusions concerning the human race; and he had long since reduced his shrewd observations almost to axioms. He had been delighted with his reception, and in his dispatches home had had many nice things to say about the Americans, but—

> I regret to be obliged to add, my Lord, that personal disinterestedness and pecuniary probity did not illustrate the birth of the American republic. All of its agents made exorbitant profits out of their manufactures. The spirit of selfish interest and of personal gain is that which is most widely spread in these countries, and I see clearly that while they deny the extent of it, they do not condemn the sentiment. The spirit of mercantile cupidity forms perhaps one of the distinctive characteristics of the Americans, and especially the people of the North and without doubt this characteristic will have an essential influence on the future destiny of the American republic.

At Carpenter's Hall the Marquis could see the pathetic figure of Silas Deane hanging disconsolately about, haunting the lobby, trying to obtain a hearing on the charges that Arthur Lee's machinations had brought against him. The sight distressed the Marquis; they had many memories in common. Gérard, too, had had many dealings with poor Deane during Deane's two busy years at Paris; Vergennes and the King himself had come to like him, and Gérard reported to Versailles: "The storm raised against that former delegate appears to have no other importance here than that which the spirit of ostracism gives to all measures directed against men who have rendered important services, as soon as circumstances make them no longer necessary."

Laurens, who had to give up the presidency of Congress to John Jay, was eager to go abroad himself, and if John Adams and Arthur Lee should succeed in having Franklin recalled from Paris, he might have a chance; however, as the bland old Doctor knew quite as much about the technique of slippery politics as they did, Laurens thought that he had better be sent to Holland to negotiate a loan.

In this atmosphere the Marquis lived for a fortnight, and as his desires did not cross the selfish interests of members, they turned out to be the only things on which the members just then could agree. Congress appointed a committee to discuss his proposals and requests. He and Gérard attended the meetings, and induced the committee to report out a resolution, thanking the Admiral and officers of the French fleet, though the satisfaction that the Admiral might have had in the compliment was neutralized by the delay in making it.

They discussed, too, the operations for the following year against Halifax, Quebec and Newfoundland, and the Marquis's boyish enthusiasm might have carried the committee

away. But they put him off, promised to give him a decision later, and to confer with Washington, who quickly put an end to that wild and impracticable scheme. He had no thought of driving one foreign power off the continent merely to put another in its place.

When the Marquis had finished his work and was ready to leave, Congress did not fail to do the handsome thing. They granted him "leave to go to France"; and to "return at such time as shall be most convenient to him"; voted him "the thanks of Congress for that disinterested zeal which led him to America, and for the services he hath rendered to the United States by the exertion of his courage and abilities on many signal occasions" and instructed Franklin "to cause an elegant sword with proper devices, to be made and presented, in the name of the United States, to the Marquis de La Fayette."

By the direction of Congress, too, the President, Henry Laurens, wrote "To Our Great, Faithful, and Beloved Friend and Ally, Louis the Sixteenth, King of France and Navarre," to "recommend this young nobleman to your majesty's notice, as one whom we know to be wise in council, gallant in the field, and patient under the hardships of war."

Compliments were showered upon him. Washington wrote Franklin recommending him, and Gérard reported to Vergennes "that the conduct, equally prudent, courageous and kind, of M. de La Fayette, has made him the idol of Congress, of the army and the people of America."

He had intended to sail in one of Estaing's ships, but Congress placed its fine new frigate, the *Alliance,* thirty-six guns, at his disposal, and he chose her instead.

He left Philadelphia on October 27, to ride to Boston, intending to stop at headquarters on the way to say good-bye

to Washington. He was quite worn out when he started; the weather was wretched, and he rode day after day, pelted by cold autumnal rains. To all this was added the strain of entertainments given in his honour along the way, for he was fêted everywhere; he developed a high fever, but he kept on, fortifying himself with tea, wine and rum. He reached Fishkill on the Hudson, eight miles from headquarters, and there he fell ill of a violent "inflammatory malady." He was put to bed, and Washington sent Dr. Joseph Cochrane, his own physician and Surgeon-General of the army to treat him, as he had treated him after his wound at Brandywine. Every day Washington rode over from his headquarters to make inquiries, but did not go into the house, for fear of exciting the invalid. He would stop outside, hear the dispiriting news and ride sorrowfully away. For the Marquis's life was despaired of. The whole country was anxious and when the news went round that the Marquis could not recover, the sorrow in the army was profound. He himself thought that his end had come, and he asked Dr. Cochrane to tell him when death was near. However, he rallied and at the end of three weeks was out of danger, and permitted to see Washington. After several days together they bade each other "a very tender, and a very painful adieu."

When he was able to mount a horse, he rode, accompanied by Dr. Cochrane, to Boston, where good Madeira wine completely re-established his health. The *Alliance* was not ready to sail, for she had not been able to sign on a crew. The Massachusetts Council offered to resort to press-gangs, but the Marquis would not hear of that method, and they made up a crew of convicts and deserters from the English army.

He had been homesick for France, but now that the

moment had come to set sail he was homesick for America. *Partir, c'est mourir un peu.* He was already looking forward to the spring when he could come back, and conquer Canada.

He had heard nothing from the Committee of Congress, and all innocent of the fact that Washington had already put an end to that ambitious project he wrote him:

How happy, my dear General, I should be to come next Spring, above all since they can still propose—I need not say what! Your first letter will let me know what I am to depend upon on that head, and, I flatter myself, the first from me will confirm to you that I am at liberty, and that most certainly I intend to come next campaign. . . . Farewell, my most beloved General; it is with emotion that I bid you this last adieu, before so long a separation. Don't forget an absent friend, and believe me forever and ever, with the highest respect and tenderest affection,

LAFAYETTE

Gimat, Pontgibaud, Duplessis and Des Brosses as well as fourteen homeward-bound officers from the fleet, were sailing with him. Nevill and La Colombe were to follow by a later ship; Price was there with several of the French officers to see him off. At last, on January 11, the *Alliance* got under way. He kept on adding postscripts to his letter down to the last minute:

Nothing from Philadelphia; nothing from headquarters. So that everybody, as well as myself, is of the opinion that I should be wrong to wait any longer. I hope I am right, and I hope to hear soon from you. Adieu, my dear and forever beloved friend,—adieu!

[And then:] The sails are just going to be hoisted, my dear General, and I have but time to take my last leave of you. . . . Farewell, my dear General; I hope your French friend will ever be dear to you; I hope I shall soon see you again, and tell you

myself with what emotion I now leave the coast you inhabit, and with what affection and respect I am forever, my dear General, your respectful and sincere friend,

LAFAYETTE

XVIII

The *Alliance* made heavy weather from the start; she was hardly off the banks of Newfoundland when the winter gales carried away her topmasts and she sprang a leak; there was one long, black night when every one thought she would founder. The Marquis, helpless in his bunk, would send young Pontgibaud every now and then to ask M. de Raimondis, captain of the *Cæsar,* who had lost an arm in the battle of Newport, what he thought of the storm, and when Pontgibaud returned with no very reassuring reply, the Marquis would say:

"What a fool I was ever to leave home at all and come out here to feed the cod-fishes!"

Towards the end of the voyage, however, they had better weather and when they found themselves in European waters, they were all gay again, thinking of France, now only two hundred leagues away. Then, one day, as they sat at dinner, one of the crew, an American, mysteriously came and asked to speak to the Marquis privately. The Marquis took him aside and the man whispered to him; King George by proclamation had announced that crews of rebel ships who would mutiny and seize their vessels might sell them as prizes and divide the spoils; the English deserters and the convicts from Boston prisons—as precious a lot of scoundrels as ever scuttled a ship—had formed a plot to seize the vessel, take her into an English port and deliver the Marquis to the English. The signal for the

mutiny was to be the cry "A sail!" and when the officers rushed on deck they were to be overpowered.

The plot was to be put into execution that very afternoon at eight bells when the watch was called and the wheel relieved; there was no time to lose. The French officers assembled the French and American sailors, and with drawn swords went below, where the watch was sleeping. The American pointed out the ring-leaders, the cords of their hammocks were cut and before they could disentangle themselves they were clapped into irons and made the rest of the voyage in the brig.

A week later, on February 6, they sighted land and the tall frigate stood in for the jagged rock that guarded the entrance to the harbour of Brest. Presently the forts on shore were thundering their salutes to the new flag of stars and stripes that flew from her spinnaker. The Marquis stood on deck with Gimat and La Colombe, and thought of the clumsy old *Victoire,* slipping out of Los Passajes Bay, and of old Kalb, growing more silent and morose in his camp off there in the wilderness of America, still pouring out letters to his wife and the Count de Broglie. How old Kalb would have loved to see those shores again!

The Marquis was too excited to waste time on the fate of the mutineers; he took a post-chaise and on the 12th reached Versailles, where he met his cousin, the Prince de Poix, and went at once to pay his respects to Maurepas and Vergennes. Then he dashed on to Paris. They were not expecting him in the rue Saint-Honoré, and he had himself announced to the Duchess d'Ayen; she came, embraced him and then went to break the news to Adrienne. He waited, restlessly pacing up and down the *salon.* The Duchess came back smiling—she was very proud of La Fayette; she had never ceased to believe in him, and had

maintained all along that he would come out of his adventure with honour and glory. And then, there was Adrienne, frail, trembling, her eyes large with excitement and surprise; she flung herself into his arms. But with the irony that is implicit in life, Adrienne's great happiness was clouded by new anxieties, for the Marquis was soon plunged into preparations for war more deeply than ever. There was, to be sure, before all else, his situation to be regularized. It was rumoured at the opera and at the Palais Royal that the hero would have to pay for his escapade by a sojourn in the Bastille; but he was too popular for that. And so, for the form, he was put under arrest for a week—there in the *hôtel* de Noailles, with Adrienne's grandfather, the old Marshal Duke de Noailles, as gaoler. The Marshal ordered him to receive no visitors, but as this prohibition did not apply to other members of the house of Noailles, the vast *salons* were thronged all that week with the fashionable society of Paris.

When he had paid this severe penalty the Marquis, with the able collaboration of the Marshal de Noailles and the Duke d'Ayen, composed a penitent letter to the King to say that "the misfortune to have displeased Your Majesty produces a sentiment of sorrow so keen that it emboldens me, not to seek to excuse an action of which Your Majesty disapproves, but to present the real motives that inspired it." He had thought that the orders of the King were due to "the solicitations and tenderness of his family"; the "sentiments of his heart had misled his reason"; he was far from daring to justify a disobedience of which His Majesty disapproved and of which he himself must repent. However, the nature of his misdeeds gave him the right to hope that he could efface them; it was to His Majesty's bounty that he should owe the happiness of washing them out, by

serving His Majesty in any country and in any manner His Majesty might deign to allow, and it was with the most profound respect that he was, Sire, Your Majesty's very humble, and very obedient servant and faithful subject, etc., etc. In short, a very charming, a very elegant and a very French letter, which, of course, did the business. The Duke d'Ayen delivered the letter, saw the right persons and the next day the Marquis was summoned to Versailles to be reprimanded by the King. If, on entering the presence of Louis XVI, he affected for a moment a becoming air of contrition, he soon forgot the rôle in the welcome he received, which was as affectionate as the phlegmatic young monarch knew how to make it; the King told him that he ought not to have done it, and then they sat down and the King asked him questions about America and about Washington.

He was advised to avoid public places—popular demonstrations, however agreeable to heroes, were so very troublesome to governments!—but he did not take the suggestion too literally. If there was no publicity, where was glory? The first time he appeared at Court, the ladies all rustled about in their flowing silks and feathers, and smothered him in kisses. At Paris he was cheered in the streets, invited everywhere, to dinners, suppers, balls, routs; he was toasted and fêted and flattered, the lion of the hour. At the Comédie Française, on the first night of Rochon de Chavanne's new comedy, "L'Amour Français," the author intercalated in one of the speeches some uninspired alexandrines in honour of the Marquis:

> Voyez ce courtisan à peu près votre âge,
> Il renonce aux douceurs d'un récent mariage,
> Aux charmes de la Cour, aux plaisirs de Paris;
> La gloire seule échauffe, embrase ses esprits.

Il vole la chercher sur un autre hémisphère
Et, croyant son pays menacé de la guerre,
C'est le patriotisme et le plus pur honneur
Qui rend à son prince un brave serviteur.[1]

If in London the newspapers announced that Louis XVI had recalled him and abandoned the rebels, the gazettes all over the Continent celebrated his triumphant return. The resolutions of Congress, and Washington's letter to Franklin were published, and when it was said that Franklin had been instructed to offer him a sword studded with diamonds, the *Gazette* of Amsterdam, where such things had their weight, was, not unnaturally, quite overcome.

To give his adventure that romantic touch without which no heroic legend is complete, the gossips revived an old story, first published after his departure two years before, attributing his flight to an unhappy love affair with the young Countess d'Hunolstein, one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Duchess de Chartres. The Duke de Chartres was mad with jealousy, but this made the story only more piquant; to have excited the jealousy of a prince of the blood, and one as popular as the dashing young scion of the house of Orléans, only added to his importance and his fame.

And then the story went round that Marie Antoinette had been so impatient to see him that on the day of his arrival she had met him in the dripping park at Versailles. It was not unpleasant to have one's name coupled with that

[1] Literally,

Behold this courtier about your own age,
He renounces the delights of a recent marriage,
The charms of the Court, the pleasures of Paris;
Only glory excites and kindles his spirit.
He flies to seek it in another hemisphere
And, believing his own country menaced by war,
It is patriotism and the purest honour
That give back to his prince a brave servitor.

of so lovely a queen, even if one had never kissed her hand elsewhere than in the palace at Versailles—where it was, at least, not quite so cold. But even if the Queen liked him no better than she ever had, the strength and extent of his legend forced her to give him a mark of the royal favour. She deigned to accord him her gracious permission to buy from the Marquis de Créquy the command of the King's Dragoons for eighty thousand *livres,* and conferred upon him the rank of *mestre de camp,* equivalent to that of Colonel.

XIX

Thus, at two-and-twenty, he was famous, and his amazing popularity made America and the American cause once more the fashion at Paris. All the young swells at Court—his old friends of the Epée de Bois, Noailles, Ségur and the rest—were eager to go to America and *faire leur petit La Fayette,* and when the bold La Motte-Picquet sailed with a squadron to supersede Estaing in the West Indies, Noailles, Edouard and Arthur Dillon, Pont de Vaux, Saint-Cirron, Barras and many other frivolous young *talons rouges* sailed with him in search of that glory in which La Fayette had come home transfigured. The Duke d'Ayen talked of going himself; the ladies in the house of Noailles were all trembling with fear.

But the Marquis, now that he had become influential at Court and had the ear of all the ministers, was busy discussing larger affairs of state. He was always at Versailles, closeted with Maurepas and Vergennes, pleading the American cause. Old Maurepas complained that, to clothe the American army, the Marquis would gladly have stripped the palace at Versailles. But he could feel that Maurepas

liked him, and before long he had fascinated the shrewd and realistic Vergennes. Vergennes, a little slow and heavy, a trifle pompous, would sit there at his great Louis XIV table, gravely listening. Vergennes saw the dangers that lay in the factional quarrels in Congress—he had had so many echoes of them in the scheming of John Adams and Arthur Lee at Versailles!—and his old opinion that the United States would never succeed unless France did more to aid them than she yet had done, was confirmed by what the Marquis told him. He was in a mood to send out a military expedition, but the Marquis, much as he liked the idea, had to tell him that he had been warned at Philadelphia on no account to ask for troops; money, supplies, everything, but no French soldiers; the jealousy and dislike of foreigners, always strong in America, was just then, because of the wretched business at Rhode Island, especially bitter against the French.

However, Vergennes thought that there could be no harm in the Marquis's writing to Washington and dropping the discreetest of little hints; he might also sound Franklin. But there was little use just then in sounding Franklin; the old fox had gone to cover. The Marquis had brought Franklin's commission and letters of credence as sole Minister to France, and John Adams and Arthur Lee, furious at having been recalled, were watching his every act. The Marquis durst not go to see Franklin as often as he desired, for fear of exciting their jealousy. The thing would require time and patience; Vergennes was always looking a long way ahead; before an army could be prepared and sent out, the need of it would be felt strongly enough to overcome this opposition.

Then he held up before Vergennes his old dazzling dream

of invading Canada. French grenadiers, Mohawks on snowshoes, crossing Lake Champlain on the ice, following their great chief Kayewla, taking Quebec, avenging Montcalm—that sort of thing! But Vergennes shook his wise, powdered head; it would never do to aggrandize the United States too much; and before adding a fourteenth state, the thirteen should be delivered from the British yoke. Very well; the conquest of Canada was laid aside for the moment; how would it do to invade England, levy contributions on coast cities and turn the proceeds of the raids over to the United States? Vergennes listened, was interested; an invasion of England had always been tempting to the French imagination; his mind went back to Choiseul; there were those fat dossiers, the old plan of Broglie; yes, it might be considered.

The Marquis's first plan was to turn over to John Paul Jones two French vessels, which, flying the American flag, and carrying a small body of troops, commanded, of course, by the Marquis, should ravage the English coast, take Liverpool and Bristol and levy contributions. But Paul Jones was a queer fellow; he was then at Paris, mysteriously prowling about the city, living in obscure lodgings, no one knew where; he was a hard man to find; when the Marquis wished to see him he had to leave a note at the Legation at Passy, and then wait. One of the two ships fitting out was the *Bonhomme Richard*—fifty guns—but the preparations dragged; there were the usual official delays, and finally the Ministry decided that the piratical expedition was beneath the dignity of the Marquis. And so it was abandoned, though the *Bonhomme Richard* was turned over to Paul Jones and he took her out and defeated the *Serapis*.

Then the Marquis returned to the project for an invasion of England in the grand style, and finally won over Ver-

gennes. The whole thing must be kept a profound secret, of course; no one was to know of it, for the moment, but Maurepas, Vergennes and La Fayette. In the meantime, by way of adventure, the Marquis thought that they ought to foment an insurrection in Ireland; and he went so far as to send Edward Bancroft to stir up the Irish, but, at the end of May, he was obliged to go to Saint Jean d'Angely to assume the command of his regiment of dragoons. It was deadly dull there, so far from Paris, and no sooner had he arrived than Lieutenant-General Count de Vaux, who commanded the garrison, and was bored to death, went back to town, so that he could hear what was going on. Then the garrison began to buzz with rumours of an expedition, and the Marquis was uneasy; the next thing he should be overlooked, and never get back to America at all. He had not the slightest intention of rusting out in the stupefying idleness of garrison duty, in a sleepy town in Saintonge, a hundred leagues from Paris, and he began to bombard Vergennes with letters. With Vergennes, as with Washington and Estaing, whenever he had anything important to urge, he always began by saying that he did not write in his official capacity, but rather as a friend. "It is not to-day, Monsieur le Comte, to the Minister of the King that I have the honour to write, but my feelings towards Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes render dear to me every occasion to assure him of them and to recall myself to his memory."

He casually mentioned the disposition that he proposed to make of "the little time" he expected to spend at Saint Jean d'Angely, and "I say the little time, Monsieur le Comte, because, persuaded that you are going to make some offensive movement, I count on the wish that they seemed to have to employ me."

"They" was Maurepas, old and slow and hard to move. But Vergennes did not take the hint. The Marquis waited a week and wrote again:

Everything echoes, Monsieur le Comte, with the noise of an expedition, and I, who perhaps know more about it than a good many people who pretend to be in the secret, see my conjectures pretty nearly justified. But no recall yet! . . . My imagination often advances into the enemy's country at the head of an advance-guard or a separate body of grenadiers, dragoons and chasseurs. . . . The thought of seeing England humiliated and crushed makes me tremble with joy. . . . Judge if I ought not to be impatient to know if I am destined to be the first to arrive on that coast and to plant the first flag in the midst of that insolent nation!

Gérard, tried by the climate and weary of the society of Philadelphia, and worn out by the quarrels of Congress, had been pleading to be allowed to come home, and the King had named the Chevalier de La Luzerne in his place. La Luzerne was going out to the States in the *Alliance* and John Adams was sailing in the same ship. La Luzerne would take letters and the Marquis spent days and nights scratching off long epistles to his American friends.

For God's sake [he urged Washington], prevent their loudly disputing together. Nothing hurts so much the interest and reputation of America, as to hear of their intestine quarrels. On the other hand, there are two parties in France; MM. Adams and Lee on one part, Dr. Franklin and his friends on the other. So great is the concern which these divisions give me that I can not wait on these gentlemen as much as I could wish, for fear of occasioning disputes and bringing them to greater collision.

It was, too, an occasion to mention a French expedition to America.

What I should like, my dear General, what would make me the happiest of men, would be to rejoin the American flag, or to place under your orders a division of four or five thousand of my compatriots. In case either a co-operation, or a special expedition should be desired, I think that if peace is not decided this winter, a demand presented in time would be granted for the next campaign.

The next day he received an express from Court, with orders to repair immediately to Versailles. There he was to meet the Count de Vaux, who had been appointed to command the troops that were to invade England. The Marquis was to be *aide-maréchal-général des logis,* and chief of staff to the General.

XX

When he reached Paris he went to Passy to see Franklin, and to him broached the idea of an expedition to America, but the Doctor thought that the time was hardly ripe. He went to Versailles and discussed it with Vergennes, and on Vergennes's suggestion drew up a *mémoire:* "Some Thoughts on an Expedition in America." Then he hastened on to Havre. The expedition against England had been decided upon in concert with Spain. French and Spanish fleets were to unite under Admiral Count d'Orvilliers, and an army was to be formed at Havre and San Malo, to be embarked and transported across the Channel to Gosport and the Isle of Wight. The assembling and drilling of the troops had already begun when he arrived at Havre; they would be ready by the time Orvilliers could fit out and arrive in those waters.

But the Spanish fleet did not arrive; Sartines, Minister of Marine, was incompetent; there was the usual want of or-

ganization, and Orvilliers, trying to fit out his fleet at Brest, was hopelessly snarled in the bewildering tangle of inertia, indifference and inefficiency. The impatient Marquis employed his time in writing to Vergennes, and a little later, in going to Versailles to consult him and Maurepas about the expedition to America. Vergennes had read the Marquis's plan for such an expedition and rather liked it. The Marquis suggested a force of four thousand men.

> We must have officers who know how to endure boredom, live on little, permit themselves no airs, and especially no quick, cutting way of speaking, be able for a year to go without the pleasures, the women, and the letters of Paris; then we must take very few colonels and gentlemen of the Court, whose ways are not at all American. . . . They will surely say, Monsieur le Comte, that the French will be badly received in that country, and looked unfavourably upon in its army. I can not deny that the Americans are a little difficult to get along with, especially for French characters; but if I were charged with this business . . . I would stake my head that I could avoid all these difficulties and cause our troops to be received perfectly. . . . A knowledge of the language would be an immense advantage; unfortunately there are few general officers (Monsieur le Duc d'Ayen excepted) who can speak it.

But the mirage of a descent in England was fading away, as it had faded so many times before, and the Marquis turned with his irresistible enthusiasm to the expedition to America. He feared that the resistance of the States was growing feeble; he suspected John Adams and Arthur Lee and their clique of feeling their way towards a separate peace; the war as waged by the hard and realistic Clinton, its rigours falling on the civil population, was quite different to that waged by the luxurious and lazy Howe; Franklin knew the need of reinforcements and succour, but

dared not ask for them. And old Maurepas, in his cynical way, would only joke about it, so the Marquis obtained leave and rushed to Versailles, saw Vergennes and the next day had an audience of Maurepas. Maurepas was rather non-committal, and La Fayette wrote to Vergennes: "What would suit me is an advance-guard of grenadiers and chasseurs and a detachment of the King's dragoons, the whole making 1,500 to 2,000 men, which would put me in a position to exercise myself."

When he went back to Havre, he took Adrienne with him; she was about to have another baby; the constant anxiety in which she had lived had told on her fragile health; and she dreaded more than ever the thought of his going off again to the wars. She was now nineteen, and "the charm of the moments spent in his presence" had deepened her feeling for him; there was a more intimate and serious confidence between them; her mind had grown riper; she had accepted all his opinions, approved all his designs, "her reason was his as well as her heart." In short, she had fallen in love with her husband. He took her to Havre, and she was present when the grandson of Franklin came to present the sword of honour that had been made from the Doctor's own designs, by the best artisans at Paris, at a cost of two hundred guineas. There could be no ceremony, with a minister represented by an awkward boy, even one who had been blessed by Voltaire, but it was of the informality affected by republics, and the Marquis was touched, the Marquise proud and happy, the officers at headquarters amused—and a little envious.

The sword was a masterpiece of the armourer's and goldsmith's art. The hilt was of massive gold, admirably chiselled, bearing the coronet of a marquis with his arms and his motto *Cur non?* and a new moon with a device *crescam*

ut prosim. The bow of the hilt was engraved "From the American Congress to Marquis de La Fayette, 1779," and on one side of the grip was a medallion representing the Marquis, sword in hand, placing one foot on the neck of the British lion; on the other, America holding in her left hand her broken chains, and with the right offering the Marquis a branch of laurel. On the sword-guard were represented in bas-relief four of the principal actions in which he had been engaged. Of Glouster in the Jersays. Retreat of Barrin Hilt. Battle of Monmouth. Retreat of Rhode Island. "Thus on the armour of Achilles, a divine chisel, in engraving his past actions, had prophesied his future exploits."

The Marquise returned to Paris and the Marquis waited at Havre, looking out beyond the cliffs across the grey waters towards England, and watching for the French and Spanish fleets. But no fleet appeared. September came in silvery haze and glittering sunlight, but still no fleet. He was afraid that he had been forgotten. Sartine's incurable incompetence, the lassitude and indifference of the Spanish were slowly wrecking the plan. Then an epidemic broke out in the French ships and decimated the crews; Orvilliers's own son died and the Admiral lost heart; bad weather came on, and so the grand scheme was abandoned.

As the Duke de Choiseul had said in one of his famous *bons mots,* the watches of ministers were always six months slow. The Marquis wrote to Vergennes that he could only weep in silence.

XXI

But he did not weep long. After all, his heart, like his luck, was in America, and there, before his eyes, was a

splendid army all equipped and ready; and he began to importune Vergennes and Maurepas to detach part of it for service in America. He was forced to employ all his charm, all his arts, all his diplomacy. The Congress did not wish French troops to land on American soil. Franklin, insecure in his position, his political enemies watching him like hawks, durst not aid him, and old Maurepas, who knew that all problems, if left long enough, will settle themselves, was glad of an excuse for postponement. Vergennes was ready and willing; he even sent the old Marshal Count de Maillebois to Franklin with a hint that if he were to request an expeditionary corps it would be granted. But Franklin would do no more than report to Congress what Maillebois had said.

Meanwhile, in November, Estaing off in the West Indies, had recklessly gone to the relief of General Lincoln at Savannah. The result was another fiasco, worse than Newport. Estaing landed a small force under Noailles and the Dillons, intrepidly led a hopeless assault himself, was wounded—and laughed at by every one.

They were tremendously interested, at the *hôtel* de Noailles in the rue Saint-Honoré, in the news from Savannah, and relieved to learn that the Viscount was alive and uninjured, and proud that he and Dillon had "conducted themselves in the assault as became French officers." There was, indeed, much cause for joy in the house of Noailles in that month of December, for on Christmas Eve the Marquise gave birth to a son, and in the private chapel he was christened George Washington.

When the news of the disaster at Savannah reached Versailles, Vergennes was convinced that France would be compelled to go to America, not to save the United States, but to save herself, and early in January he told La Fayette

to win over Maurepas if he could. The Marquis had an audience of the Prime Minister in his room over the King's study at Versailles, but it was not satisfactory; they were constantly interrupted, secretaries were forever slipping in with papers for the Prime Minister to sign, and even as he listened to the Marquis, the weary old statesman kept that quill-pen in his hand and abstractedly tapped his chin with it, fixing on him that polite, non-committal gaze which old ministers acquire in long years of parrying requests. Therefore, the Marquis had recourse to his pen and wrote out another long *mémoire*. Fortunately he had just received a letter from Hamilton, and, better still, a letter from Washington; Washington had said something which, with a slight twist in translation, might indicate a desire for aid; Hamilton said as much or more, and the Marquis turned both of these letters to account; the troops would not only be welcomed by the Americans but the intervention had become essential to the interests of France. He wrote, of course, as usual,

> not to the Minister, but to Monsieur le Comte de Maurepas. If the French commander does not know how to humour the dispositions of the Congress and the different dispositions of each State, if he speaks to an officer from Boston as he would speak to one from Newport, to a member of the assembly of Poughkeepsie as to one from the so-called State of Vermont, he is very sure to displease them, very certain to miss the mark of his voyage. But without inquiring, Monsieur le Comte, if the intimate friendship of the general, if the confidence of the army and the people, if, in a word, to use the English phrase, my popularity gives me this boldness, supposing that I should command the detachment on land, I stake my head on avoiding even the shadow of jealousy and dispute.

The *mémoire*—and a few private words of Vergennes'—convinced the Prime Minister, the expedition was decided

en principe; the command would be settled later. Vergennes secured an advance of three million *livres* and later another three million to buy arms and uniforms for the American army.

The Marquis, at his own expense, ordered swords to present to the officers and non-commissioned officers of his own command, and uniforms and helmets with red and black horse-hair plumes for his men. Then, knowing how dilatory ministers could be, he began to dash about to all the *dépôts* and arsenals to galvanize the bureaucrats and hasten the details of preparation. He went to Nantes where the uniforms were being made, and the arms chosen; then he intended to look over the King's regiment at Angers and form a detachment, go to Lorient to expedite work on the frigates and inspect the battalion of grenadiers. He hoped to be back in Paris about February 20, and, as he wrote Vergennes, "take leave in an American uniform and if the wind is favourable we should sail the 1 March. . . . If the command of this small body is given to an old *maréchal de camp,* we are sure to displease all the American chiefs. . . . Hence, 1st. I believe that it is best to give me the corps. 2nd. If they do not give it to me, then I must leave at once with the means that I have asked for."

But he did not receive the command; even absolute monarchs cannot overcome the exquisitely delicate susceptibilities of military officers, who can lay waste whole provinces and slay their thousands, but shrink in horror from the least semblance of a slight. In the eyes of the other officers the Marquis already had more rank and consideration than he deserved, and they would not entertain the thought of serving under this upstart of two-and-twenty. And so the King called upon a seasoned old lieutenant-general, veteran of the Seven Years' War, the Count de Rochambeau, to

command the expedition of six thousand men that was to be sent out to America in the fleet of Admiral de Ternay. La Fayette was to go on ahead to announce to Washington the coming of this small army and to prepare the way for its reception. The frigate *Hermione,* Captain Count de La Touche-Tréville, was ordered into commission to convey him to America. The Marquis had several interviews with Rochambeau, and on March 5 received his commission, instructions and dispatches from the hand of Vergennes. The French troops were to be under the orders of Washington and to give the American troops, in all circumstances, the right of the line. To these instructions Vergennes added others in the form of a "Projet Particulier," advising the Marquis, in order to satisfy Spain, to recommend that Florida be given to the Spanish crown.

His preparations were all made; the swords and leather helmets with red and black plumes were all on board the *Hermione;* his uniforms were not ready and were to be sent by Ternay's fleet when it sailed.

There were painful good-byes in the rue Saint-Honoré; Adrienne's grief was greater than it had been when he had stolen away without bidding her farewell. But there was no stealing away this time; in his uniform as major-general of the United States army, he had his farewell audience of the King, and went off with his head high, on an official mission, proud of his achievement in having obtained the intervention of France in favour of the United States.

On the evening of March 9, 1780, he boarded the *Hermione* at the Ile d'Aix. She called at La Rochelle on the 13th to pick up Gimat, La Colombe and Nevill—Pontgibaud was sailing on the *Alliance* with Arthur Lee—and during the night put out to sea.

XXII

On April 26, 1780, the *Hermione* sailed up Boston Harbour to the salutes of guns from the Castle and Fort Hill. There was no going ashore that day, or the next, for when the ship came to anchor and the news got about Boston, preparations for a reception had to be made and, eager though he was to land, the Marquis was obliged to wait. He wrote a note to Washington: "Here I am again, my dear General, and in the midst of the joy I feel in finding myself again one of your loving soldiers I take but the time to tell you that I came from France on board a frigate that the King gave me for my passage." The day after landing he would set out to join his "beloved and revered friend and general. Adieu. You will easily recognize the hand of your young soldier." He landed the next morning, and as the ship's boat drew near the shore, the sweet sound of cheering came across the water; the crowds on the quays saw the well-known silhouette—the slightly theatrical air, the head thrown proudly back, the long, distinguished, receding profile, and went wild with joy. They had not been expecting him; no one in all America had known that he was on the sea, and this sudden and dramatic apparition produced the effect he would have it produce; nothing could have been finer. He was escorted to the house of John Hancock in State Street, through cheering crowds, whilst guns roared salutes and the church bells pealed a welcome. Great throngs assembled before the house and huzzaed, bonfires blazed in the street, fireworks were set off from the balcony of the Exchange Tavern and the bells of the North Church rang all evening. Official visits were exchanged, and the Marquis gave a dinner on board the *Hermione;* the toast to Washington was drunk

to the thunder of seventeen guns, the number given to a Marshal of France.

He did not know where to find Washington, and it was only after riding across New England and the Jerseys for nearly a fortnight that he found him at Morristown; his letter had reached the General three days before, and at headquarters they told the Marquis that when the General opened it, his stoicism had been caught off guard, and that tears had rolled down those heavy, pock-marked cheeks. Then, after that regrettable exhibition of weakness before his family, he got himself in hand and wrote—in the style proper to an excellency and commander-in-chief—a letter of welcome to the Marquis, to say that he had received his announcement "with all the joy that the sincerest friendship could dictate, and with that impatience which an ardent desire to see you could not fail to inspire."

The Marquis arrived at Morristown that May morning amidst the huzzas of the soldiers and the joy of everybody at headquarters, and after all the greetings, the General and the Marquis shut themselves up in a room together, and the Marquis told him the great news.

It came just in time. Washington had never been so near despair. The army, reduced to six thousand men, without clothes, boots or pay, was almost on the point of disintegration. They were days on end without bread or meat; Washington said that they had eaten "every kind of horse-food but hay." Enlistments had ceased; there were no funds in the war chest; the paper money was worthless; at Philadelphia congressmen were making speeches about sterile political theories, and disputing about places under a government that they had talked almost to death; John Adams and Benjamin Rush urged that a new commander-in-chief be elected each year.

The Marquis remained four days at headquarters, discussing remedies for a situation that was not only desperate, but humiliating; for what would the French say when they arrived to put themselves under Washington's command and found his army in such a state? Then Washington asked the Marquis to undertake a delicate and difficult mission; nothing less than to go to Philadelphia and induce Congress to stop talking and to act. Washington dared make no direct overtures himself; such a step would have been denounced as an outrageous prelude to military domination. The Marquis set out on the 14th, and was at Philadelphia two days later. He bore a letter from Washington in which the General expressed his joy in the return of his lieutenant, and with this the Marquis presented to Congress a letter of his own written in that English which had grown a little rusty in a year's disuse at Paris:

> If from an early epoch in Our Noble Contest, I gloried in the name of an American Soldier, and heartily enjoyed the honour I have of serving the United States, my satisfaction is at this long wish'd for moment entirely compleat—When putting an end to my furlough, I have been able again to join my colours, under which I may hope for opportunities of indulging the ardent zeal, the unbounded gratitude, the warm, and, I might say, the patriotic love By which I am forever Bound to America.

He did not dare to tell them in Congress that the King of France was sending out an expedition; the French government had insisted that the matter be kept a profound secret, and no one knew of it, except the English, who dispatched the news to New York, and sent Admiral Graves with a fleet to reinforce Admiral Arbuthnot in American waters. The news was published in the gazettes of New York and soon reached Philadelphia, which was just as well, for it relieved the Marquis of his load of secrecy. He

roused everybody at Philadelphia as he had at Versailles; the ladies began to sew for the soldiers, subscriptions were opened and he put down the Marquise de La Fayette for a hundred guineas. He consulted La Luzerne, who pulled a few wires in Congress; a committee, happily small, was appointed to confer with him on ways and means, and a few days later he was riding back to Morristown officially charged by Congress to inform Washington that he was authorized to take the necessary measures to render the co-operation of the French fleet effective, and to make representations to the governors of the states.

Whilst they were waiting for Ternay's fleet, they tried to put the army in "a better and more decent" condition, and the Marquis wrote letters to welcome Rochambeau when he should land at Newport. Washington considered plans for attacking New York, where the greater part of the British troops were snugly in garrison, and, in order to deceive the enemy, he asked the Marquis to draw up proclamations, in French, addressed to the French-Canadians, announcing an expedition into Canada for their deliverance; the proclamations were not to be distributed in Canada, but were to be allowed to slip through the British lines into New York. Washington entrusted the secret and gave the proclamations to Benedict Arnold, who was to get them into English hands. Arnold had no difficulty in doing this.

XXIII

They were in camp at Bergen, New Jersey, when an express from General Heath at Boston announced the arrival of the fleet. Old Rochambeau had come ashore from the *Duc de Bourgogne,* worn out by a long voyage of seventy days, and had written to Washington: "We are now,

Sir, under your command." The General at once sent the Marquis to Newport with a letter recommending him to Rochambeau as a general officer in whom he had the greatest confidence, and as a friend "perfectly acquainted with my sentiments and opinions. . . . All the information he gives, and all the propositions he makes, I entreat you to consider as coming from me. I request you will settle all arrangements whatsoever with him."

The Marquis arrived on the old familiar scene on July 25 to find the old familiar complications; he delivered Washington's message; the General wished to assume the offensive at once, and besiege New York. But Rochambeau merely sniffed. He was a crusty old fellow, with a contempt for the Americans, and, as the Marquis saw at a glance, with no liking for him. Rochambeau had not even read his letters; true, they were long, and written in his own fine pointed handwriting which some persons found so difficult to read; doubtless they had bored him; but even so— Looking more closely into the leathery old face of the Count, the Marquis saw that he was slightly piqued at being asked to discuss grave military matters with him, a youngster, even if the youngster was a major-general in the American army. The old soldier, on whom the irritability of age was already settling, disliked the Marquis's enthusiasm (he snapped out at Lauzun one day that he "liked zeal, but that ardour displeased him"), and besides, the Marquis was French, and men serving abroad never like to see one of their own fellow citizens esteemed by the natives above themselves, and invested with an importance they would not have at home. He bluntly said that he would deal with no one but Washington in person, and told the Marquis to go back to headquarters and ask the General to appoint a time and place for an interview.

However, there were other officers at Newport who were glad to see him, first of all, Noailles, now serving with the regiment of the Bourbonnais. There were many of his old friends, among them his cousin the Marquis de Chastellux, a major-general, Rochambeau's chief of staff and an Academician; the dashing Duke de Lauzun; the Marquis de Laval-Montmorency; the Count de Charlus, only son of the Marquis de Castries; Charles de Damas and Matthieu Dumas. And there was the handsome young Swedish nobleman, the Count de Fersen, in the aureole of his romantic love for Marie Antoinette, having left France, the gossips said, not in the hope of curing himself of that passion, but to spare the Queen the comment their attachment had already excited. They were all having a gay time; they danced, sketched, flirted, kept diaries. Noailles was already interested in a pretty Quaker girl, Mollie Robinson. Lauzun, with his Legion, had been ordered into barracks at Lebanon, a few cabins scattered in immense forests, where the horses could have forage, but he spent most of his time at Newport. He spoke English and was a great favourite; though, as the morals of Newport at that epoch were rather austere, his *Mémoires* afterwards suffered somewhat.

It was a joy to the Marquis to see the familiar uniforms that brightened the two drab streets of wooden houses, all there was of Newport—the white uniform of the regiments of Deux-Ponts, the black and red of the Bourbonnais, the white and green of the Saintonge, and the white coats with rose-coloured facings, and the pink and white plumes of the grenadiers of the Soissonnais.

The French, at first, had met with a cold reception. When Rochambeau went ashore he found no one to wel-

come him; the inhabitants were stolidly indifferent, no one was in the streets, and all the windows were closed. But the next day, when the news got about, the mayor and city fathers appeared, and that night the windows were opened, houses and streets illuminated, bells rung and there was a display of fireworks. The fine discipline of the troops impressed the Americans, who had never seen anything like it; pigs and chickens ran unmolested through the camp; the French soldiers did not even pick the apples that hung over their tents. And as they paid on the nail in gold for everything the Rhode Islanders soon came to love the soldiers, and charged them exorbitant prices.

The Marquis spent a few days with his old friends, and then rode back to Dobbs Ferry. Washington was perplexed and troubled by Rochambeau's attitude; he did not like to ask the Count to make the long journey to Dobbs Ferry, and with Clinton so near, he dared not leave his own army for a day; and so he told the Marquis to write again to Rochambeau, and even dictated an outline of what he should say. The Marquis wrote a long letter, addressed to Rochambeau and Ternay jointly, begging them to join Washington at once in an attack on New York.

Washington made him happy by investing him with the command of the Light Infantry that was to be the advance guard of the Continentals. The corps had been specially selected by Washington from the best of his troops, and consisted of two thousand men, divided into two brigades, one commanded by General Hand, the other by General Poor. They became the crack corps of the army; they were tough Yankees, and as good shots as the men that served in Morgan's Rifles or under Light Horse Harry Lee. The Marquis had in mind some such command as this when

"as a traveller brings back from far countries presents for his family and his friends," he had brought back those swords for the officers and non-commissioned officers, and those leather helmets with the red and black plumes. He had expected to find the uniforms at Newport, for they were to have been brought by Ternay's fleet, but they had forgotten to load them at Brest. However, they were coming out by the *Alliance* on her next voyage. He had brought a flag for each battalion; one embroidered with a cannon and the device: *Ultima ratio*—he had left out the *regum,* since kings had gone out of fashion in America—the other with a civic crown and a wreath of laurel, with the motto *No other.* Those backwoodsmen had not the least idea what it meant, but they were proud of it, and of their red and black plumes.

The Marquis had sent his long letter to Newport, but no answer came. Then a letter came from Rochambeau, addressed to Washington, saying that, so long as they had not a superiority on the sea, and until the second division of the French forces or Guichen's West Indies fleet should arrive, or Clinton strip New York, he must refuse to join him in an attack, and again asked for a personal interview.

Then, a few days later, the Marquis received from him a petulant and sarcastic letter:

> As to your suggestion, my dear Marquis, that the position of the French in Rhode Island is of no service to the Americans I shall observe:
>
> 1st. That I have not yet heard it said that it has done any of them any harm.
>
> 2nd. That it would be well to reflect that the position of the French corps may have had something to do with Clinton's evacuation of the mainland and with his confining himself to Long Island and to New York; also that, while the French fleet is being watched here by a superior and assembled naval force,

in fact the coast of America is undisturbed, your privateers take valuable prizes, and your merchant marine has full liberty. It seems to me that in such a comfortable position one may very well await the augmentation of forces that the King assured me he would send; . . . I fear these Savannahs and other events of that nature, of which I have seen so many in my life. It is a principle in war as in geometry, *vis unita fortitor*. Moreover, I await the orders of my generalissimo, and I implore him to accord to the admiral and me an interview.

They were finding old Rochambeau a hard nut to crack; Ternay, in his different way, was as bad, or worse. Admiral Graves had now joined Admiral Arbuthnot, and three thousand troops had arrived at New York in transports. Ternay might have taken the transports had he been enterprising, but he was a sick, desponding, timid man, with no stomach for a fight unless the odds were overwhelmingly in his favour. He could not forget the thrashing the English navy had given the French navy in the Seven Years' War, and remembering the unlucky Estaing, feared that a like fate might befall him. He wrote home that there was absolutely no hope for the cause of American independence, appealed to Admiral Guichen in the West Indies to come to his relief and settled in at Rhode Island, while Rochambeau was entrenching and digging in for a long stay.

Washington began to fear that he was in for another quarrel like that with Estaing. The letter that had so offended the techy Rochambeau had been written practically under his dictation, and besides, was entirely in conformity with the Marquis's instructions as contained in the "Projet Particulier" given to him by Vergennes. He had sent the Marquis in the belief that a Frenchman, especially a Frenchman like the Marquis, would be precisely

the one to deal with Rochambeau and the Admiral. His own situation was growing daily more desperate, but he set patiently and doggedly to work to repair the breach. He wrote a letter to Guichen in the West Indies asking him to come to the relief of Rhode Island, and sent it to La Luzerne to be coded and forwarded to the Admiral. He wrote to Rochambeau to smooth his ruffled hackles, and placed himself at his disposition for an interview.

And the Marquis sent to Rochambeau one of those gallant letters he knew so well how to write, taking all the blame on himself.

After four months, during which I have been busy day and night in preparing the minds of men to receive you, to respect you, to love you; after all that I have said to demonstrate the advantages of your sojourn at Rhode Island, and after having used my influence to convince the people of this truth, in short, Monsieur le Comte, after having done all that my patriotism and my feeling for you dictated to me, my heart could not fail to be affected to see you give to my letter an unfavourable construction of which I had never dreamed. If, in the course of that letter, I could have offended you or displeased you; if, for example, you find out of place the written account that General Washington asked of me and which I thought it my duty to submit to you, I give you my word of honour that I thought I was doing a very simple thing, so simple even that I should have regretted it as a want of duty towards you had I failed to give it. . . .

If I have offended you, I ask your pardon for two reasons, the first is that I love you, the second that my intention is to do here everything that can please you. Wherever I am only as an individual, your orders shall be laws for me, and for the least of the Frenchmen who are here I shall make all sacrifices rather than not contribute to their glory, to their pleasure, to their union with the Americans. Such, Monsieur le Comte, are my sentiments, and while you may think that I entertain some

that are wholly contrary to my heart, I forget that injustice in order to think only of my attachment to you.

Rochambeau, in his reply, took the paternal and patronizing tone.

Permit an old father, my dear Marquis, to reply to you as to a tender son whom he loves and infinitely esteems. You know me well enough to believe that I have no need to be incited, that at my age, when one has been forced by circumstances to reach a decision founded on military and state reasons, all the instigations possible can not make me change without positive orders of my general. . . . You are humiliated, my dear friend, in your quality of Frenchman, to see an English squadron . . . blockade here the squadron of the Chevalier de Ternay; but console yourself. . . . It is always well, my dear Marquis, to believe that the French are invincible; but I am going to confide to you a great secret, after an experience of forty years; there are no troops easier to defeat after they have lost confidence in their chiefs, and they lose that once when they have been compromised by individual and personal ambibition. If I have been happy enough to preserve theirs until now, I owe it to the most scrupulous examination of my conscience; of the fifteen thousand men, or nearly, in different grades, who have been killed or wounded under my orders in the most murderous actions, I do not have to reproach myself with having caused a single one of them to be killed for my own account. . . . In case one of the three chances to put ourselves in a position to act offensively occurs . . . you will still find in your old dotard of a father some remains of vigour and activity.

Be persuaded then, of my most tender friendship, and if I have very gently recalled your attention to the things that displeased me in your last dispatch, I reasoned at once that the warmth of your nature and of your heart had heated a little the coolness and the wisdom of your judgment. Preserve this last quality in council, and reserve the first for the moment of execution. It is always the old father Rochambeau who speaks

to his dear son Lafayette, whom he loves, and will love and esteem until his last breath.

The *Alliance* had come into port on August 16, bringing the disheartening news that the second division of Rochambeau's command under Bougainville was still blockaded by an English fleet in the harbour of Brest. The *Alliance* did not bring the uniforms either; they had been lost in the inextricable jungle of French administration. But she brought Arthur Lee, which meant more trouble at Philadelphia, and the young Pontgibaud. And on that same day a calamity befell the cause at Camden in South Carolina. Gates was commanding there, and the luck that for so long had concealed his incapacity failed at last. He was opposing Cornwallis, who, the evening of August 15, had slowly manœuvred him into a desperate position between two swamps. Kalb was with him, and advised a retreat; but the infatuated Gates would not listen. At dawn of that hot August day, Cornwallis attacked, and by some madness Gates, dissatisfied with his own order of battle, tried at the last moment to alter his position, opening his columns of raw militia to execute some impossible manœuvre. Cornwallis saw the mistake; Tarleton and his legion, sitting their horses, were waiting to charge. The redcoats moved forward; Gates's columns could not form again and broke; Tarleton's buglers blew the charge, and his troopers were soon sabring the flying militia. And Kalb saw that it was all over. He took his place at the head of his men, drew his sword, and led his last bayonet charge. Time and again he was wounded, but he went stubbornly on, leading that forlorn hope against the advancing horse, until he fell at last, pierced by eleven bullets.

Du Buysson caught him in his arms as he fell, covered

him with his own body, and called out to Tarleton's troopers galloping over them, cutting and thrusting,

"Spare the Baron de Kalb!"

XXIV

The situation between Washington and Rochambeau was beginning to grow somewhat strained, when the Marquis arranged for them to meet on September 20 at Hartford, half-way between their respective headquarters. The Marquis, with Gouvion and his aides, McHenry, a young American doctor, and General Knox and Hamilton, accompanied the General to the conference. They reached Hartford before Rochambeau, and were met by Governor Jonathan Trumbull and Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth with the Governor's Guards. An hour later the Governor and his party went to the ferry to receive Rochambeau and his staff with the same honours, Governor's Guards and all. Washington went to meet them on the way, and in the public square, before the Court House, Washington and Rochambeau shook hands, and the Hartford crowd cheered madly.

Fersen, Damas and Matthieu Dumas were eager to see Washington—all of Rochambeau's officers had begged to accompany him—and they could not take their eyes off the commanding figure in the blue coat with the buff facings and massive gold epaulettes, the buff waistcoat, the buff breeches and top-boots with spurs. He overtopped Rochambeau in height, and in spite of the Count's gold-embroidered coat, his ribbon and star, and lace at throat and wrists, outshone him, though he had not a single decoration on his breast.

They were escorted to the Wadsworth mansion, and there, ceremoniously and formally, using interpreters,

though Rochambeau spoke some English and probably knew more than he spoke, they began to discuss the situation. Washington said little; he sat for the most part in a pensive silence—the blue eyes studying his new French allies; he soon perceived that the instructions that had placed the French under his command were but a polite fiction, a "delicate attention"—too delicate to be used. But they got on, with a great deal of scrupulous courtesy, a strict observance of all the etiquette and protocol, "Your Excellency" incessantly repeated. The Marquis took pains to efface himself; he knew that the French officers were jealous of him, and that most of them had vowed not to serve under him. The discussions lasted two days: Rochambeau and Ternay drew up a document entitled "Ideas Submitted to His Excellency General Washington by M. le Comte de Rochambeau and M. le Chevalier de Ternay"; leaving on the right a wide margin for "The Replies of General Washington." In this space, opposite each paragraph, Washington wrote his comments; in every case he agreed with his allies; Article VII summed it all up; the situation of America rendered it absolutely necessary that France send further support in ships, men and money. Washington, Rochambeau and Ternay signed these synallagmatic minutes, and it was decided to send them, with dispatches setting forth in detail the gravity of the situation, to France. Rochambeau selected his son, the Viscount de Rochambeau, for this mission, and Ternay detached a swift frigate, the *Amazone,* under Captain La Perouse, to bear the lad to France. Young Rochambeau was endowed with a prodigious memory; he learnt his dispatches by heart, so that, in case of his capture by the English, he could destroy them and still deliver their contents. On the evening of October 28, the *Amazone,* with young Rocham-

beau on board, set sail in a storm, slipped through the English blockade and got away to sea.

XXV

On their way back to camp Washington proposed that they ride round by West Point; he wished to show the Marquis the excellent fortifications there, and Gouvion was even more eager to show them, for he and Du Portail had constructed them. Washington had recently appointed Benedict Arnold to the command of West Point; and now they would pay the General and Mrs. Arnold a little visit and have breakfast with them. But at Fishkill they met La Luzerne on his way to visit the French forces at Newport, and the Minister prevailed on Washington to stop the night there, so that it was not until the next morning that they set out for West Point. They turned aside, however, to look at some redoubts, and sent Hamilton and McHenry on ahead to make their excuses to Mrs. Arnold and to ask her not to wait breakfast. Thus they arrived late at Robinson's house, where Arnold lived, and found things in disorder; Hamilton and McHenry had been at breakfast with Arnold and his wife, when a letter was brought in; Arnold had read it, turned pale and at once got up, saying that he had to ride to West Point, but that he should be back in an hour. A few moments later, Mrs. Arnold had been called from the table and had left the room. Neither had returned. The Marquis and the General ate a bit of breakfast and then went across the river. Not finding Arnold there, they came back, to learn that a spy had been arrested and brought to West Point. Washington sent Hamilton to inquire. After a while Hamilton returned, his sensitive, boyish face white with horror.

"It's Major André!" he gasped, and handed to the General the papers that had been taken on André, revealing the sordid story of Arnold's treason. The news spread through the post; officers and men were filled with rage; Arnold must be captured and hanged with André; had not the English hanged Nathan Hale? Washington told Hamilton to take fifty horse and capture him. The Marquis thought that Arnold would have the decency to blow out his own brains, but Hamilton returned to report that he was safe on board an English man-o'-war, the *Vulture*.

Hamilton was with André in the guard-house, trying to find on him some bit of uniform, a waistcoat, anything that would remove the stigma of spying, and save him from the gallows, and the Marquis, who, after the first moment of horror, had felt a pity for him, waited, hoping that Hamilton would succeed. His heart was full of pity, too, for Mrs. Arnold, there in her room upstairs, now swooning, now in hysterics, screaming that "Washington was going to murder her husband." The Marquis had seen her so often in the drawing-rooms at Philadelphia, when, as Peggy Shippen, she was the reigning beauty; she was so lovely, so full of wit and charm! . . . The next morning she consented to see him, and he told her of General Washington's sympathy and his own. It had been decided at first to send her to Philadelphia, and he wrote to La Luzerne, begging him to use his influence in her favour; it would be exceedingly painful to General Washington if she were not treated with the greatest kindness. "As for myself, you know that I have always been fond of her, and at this moment she interests me intensely." But a letter from Arnold, dated on board the *Vulture* the evening of his flight, came to Washington; a preposterous and insolent letter, threatening to lay the country waste with fire and sword, and burn

down Mount Vernon, if Washington dared to take vengeance on his wife or children. Washington sent an aide to Mrs. Arnold to say that, since he had been unable to capture her husband, he had the pleasure to inform her that Arnold had reached a place of safety. Then he sent her, under escort of Hamilton, to the English lines at New York.

The Marquis was detailed as a member of the court-martial that sat in the little brick meeting-house at Tappan on September 29 to try André, and it was the hardest duty he had ever had to perform. He sat in the musty little meeting-house with the six major- and eight brigadier-generals who composed the court, Greene presiding; it all seemed so unreal; the voice of the judge-advocate sounded so queer, so startling, in the solemn stillness of that stark, barren room with the pews, the empty pulpit. . . . André was about his own age, he should say. He had been so gay, so popular, at Philadelphia that winter when they were at Valley Forge; and no wonder, young and handsome as he was. And now, to-day, in this ordeal, he was so frank, so noble, so delicate; the Marquis was filled with infinite pity. . . . Hamilton had been unable to find any saving scrap of military character in his disguise; there were the papers, and the testimony of those honest fellows, Paulding, Williams and Van Wert. There was no way out, so long as war was war. . . .

After the verdict the Marquis went out of that dim interior into the blinding glare of the sun, his eyes filled with tears. He hunted up Hamilton, and they went to headquarters to see the General; he did not often refuse what they asked. The sentinel at the door saluted; Black Billy, whose happy lot it was to know only one duty and one loyalty, snoozed in a corner. They found the General at

his table, with his endless papers. They had never seen his face quite so sad. They begged him to commute André's sentence, or at least to allow him, as André had asked, to be shot instead of hanged. He listened, was moved, inclined to accede. Then Greene and Sullivan came; they reminded him of the fate of Nathan Hale and insisted that the example be made.

On October 2, a day of blue and gold, a pall of horrid silence descended upon the camp at Tappan. All the shutters were closed at headquarters; Washington had given orders that he should be left alone from twelve to two. The Marquis kept his room. At noon the troops were formed in a hollow square, the drums rolled, and André was hanged, while the Piermont hills, clothed in their autumnal splendour of red and bronze, looked on with the serene and pitiless indifference of Nature to human pain.

XXVI

It was November, campaigning was over for that year, and in camp at Prakeness, under the melancholy autumnal rains and with nothing to do, the Marquis was restless and discontented. His friends were having a gay time of it at Newport, and urged him to come to the suppers they were always giving to the "girls." But such dissipations had little interest for him.

I hope [he wrote to Noailles], that our mistresses will never be exigent enough to prevent our having a supper with the girls, nor we stupid enough to break up a party by obedience. If I had a mistress, my sentiment would be founded partly on the delicacy of the pride that she should show by not being jealous, and on the liberty that I should have to do everything that I wished, even to neglect her, without ever finding her

exigent. That mistress, then, would attach me forever, at all events I think so, if not more by a violent passion, at least by the most tender attachment. I do not like girls because stupidity is a bore and impudence disgusting; but so long as they have my kind friends as lovers, their good taste will reconcile me to them. Adieu, a thousand compliments to the society of the suppers. I embrace Lauzun, Damas, and Charlus, who may read this letter if it interests them.

Then Noailles, Chastellux and Damas rode over from Newport to pay him a visit, and as Chastellux was a major-general, Washington insisted that he be his guest at head-quarters. The next morning Washington gave orders for a review, and mounting Chastellux on one of the two blooded horses that the State of Virginia had presented to him, galloped with him to the Marquis's headquarters in a hard rain. The Marquis had gone to assemble his Light Brigade, and when he returned he found Washington and Chastellux, wet through, drying themselves by his fire, and drinking from the bowl of grog that stood on his table. Then they rode on, all three, to the height where the Marquis, prouder in receiving his cousin Chastellux there than at Chavaniac, paraded his command, and while the band played the "Huron" march, they passed the troops in review.

The rain pelted down on the red and black plumes, and the General and the officers were glad when the review was over and they could scamper back, the mud flying from their horses' hoofs, to headquarters. They sat down twenty to dinner at a long table drawn out diagonally in the small room; the meal was served in the English fashion, large platters of beef and fowl, vegetables, pies and puddings. Afterwards, the cloth was removed, the Madeira was set out, and apples and hickory-nuts brought on. Washington

sat for two hours picking out and eating the kernels of hickory-nuts, every now and then announcing the solemn toasts, the King of France, the Queen, the French army, Our Honoured Guests, the Congress, etc. At half-past seven he rose, and at once the batmen shortened the table, relaid the cloth and announced supper; Chastellux was astonished and alarmed, but His Excellency explained that he was accustomed to take something in the evening. Towards nine o'clock, three or four light dishes were served, then fruit and nuts again, and the Bordeaux and Madeira, and whilst the General picked his hickory-nuts, more toasts, less formal, were drunk, announced this evening by the slender young Hamilton. About eleven o'clock each gentleman had to give a "sentiment," that is, propose the health of a lady to whom he was attached by love, or friendship, or preference.

The French officers, who were all industriously keeping journals so that they could duly write the *Mémoires* that posterity expects of every titled Frenchman, saw much to ridicule, much to criticize and much to condemn in Americans and their manners, but they all agreed in their admiration of Washington, and noted in him that perfect ensemble of qualities which often led unimaginative minds to consider him mediocre.

Chastellux, as an Academician, was going to write a book about his travels, and went on to Philadelphia, where Noailles and Damas joined him. The young Frenchman found Philadelphia a drab and dreary town of some forty thousand inhabitants, with a *bourgeois* aristocracy wrapped in the exclusiveness of provincial self-satisfaction. However, as friends of the Marquis, they were made welcome. They were invited to enormous breakfasts, made their calls in the morning according to the Philadelphia custom, went

to tea parties and dined out every day. Dinner was served *à l'Anglaise,* and the young *talons rouges,* used to the amenities of Paris and Versailles, were bored by the toasts and the custom of drinking with every one of the twenty-five or thirty persons at table. They considered it barbarous. They did not like the Quakers, with their oily, wheedling and sanctimonious manner. "They would not shed blood, above all their own, but they shamelessly swindled both sides out of money." They found, too, a want of those resources that make life agreeable—there was not even a public promenade. "The reason for this is that all these sectarians consider every amusement, private or public, as a transgression of the law and a pomp of Satan. Happily the small amount of zeal that they have shown in the present crisis has caused them to lose credit."

The delegates in Congress gave them dinners in the City Tavern, which they had taken over for their own use, but factional and sectional differences ruled here too, for one dinner was given by the delegates from the Northern States, another by those of the Southern States. They attended a session of the Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, heard General Mifflin make a speech—in the style of the House of Commons with Latin tags—and were shown all the sights of Philadelphia—the Natural History Museum, Dr. Rittenhouse's orrery and the anatomical specimens in wax of Dr. Shovel, who had been a Whig when the English were in Philadelphia, and now that the Americans were there, had turned Tory. After these exciting dissipations they went to take tea at the house of Colonel Bland, a tall, handsome member for South Carolina, who had travelled extensively and practised his French on them. There they met Izard, and Arthur Lee, just arrived by the *Alliance* from Europe.

Montesquieu and Lynch came to join them, and the Marquis took them all—Noailles, Damas, Duplessis-Maudit, Montesquieu, Lynch, Gimat and Nevill—to visit the field of Brandywine. They crossed the Schuylkill on the same ferry from which Coudray had been drowned, and the next day the Marquis showed his friends over the battle field. Late in the afternoon, as they were riding back to Chester, having sent on their aides and servants to order dinner for them at the tavern there, the Marquis, Chastellux and Noailles somehow became separated from the others, and jingled along the road together, in the early winter twilight, talking of Paris, their friends and relatives and the society at Court.

They reached the inn at Chester, had an excellent dinner and very good wine, and were all in such good humour that they laughed and sang and danced all the evening. The landlord of the inn and his people gaped at them as though they had come from the moon, and could not understand how men could be so gay without being drunk.

La Luzerne gave a ball for them at the Legation. Noailles and Damas were the gayest of them all and the best dancers. The Abbé Robin, who had come over with the fleet, observed that the title of brother-in-law to the Marquis won for Noailles more consideration than his title of viscount and his great family name, "for the young American girls it was a flattering distinction to have danced with him." It was the usage then in America for each lady to have a partner, and to dance with no one else all the evening, and strangers were "complimented with the handsomest ladies." Mistress Bingham, then only seventeen, and a beauty with no rivals except Miss Shippen, danced with Damas, and Miss Shippen with Noailles, and the two young

men "as true philosophers, showed a great respect for the customs of the country, and did not leave their partners during the whole evening." At midnight supper was served, and the King's Minister offered his arm to Mistress Morris, because she was the richest lady in the city, "for, as here all ranks are equal, men follow their natural propensity, which is to show first consideration to riches."

The next day they visited Washington's old camp at Whitemarsh, and on their return to Philadelphia they dined early at the Legation and then went to take tea with Mistress Shippen. There, "Miss Rutledge played on the clavichord, and played it very well; Miss Shippen sang with timidity, but with a sweet voice. M. Ottaw, secretary to the Chevalier de La Luzerne, had his harp brought in; he accompanied Miss Shippen, and besides played several pieces. Music leads naturally to dancing; the Viscount de Noailles went and took down a violin, which he strung with harp-strings, and he made the young ladies dance, while the mothers and the other grave personages chatted in another room."

The next day the Marquis conducted his party to Barren Hill, where he described his famous retreat, then, back in Philadelphia, he took Chastellux to call on Tom Paine, in whom the Academician recognized "all the attributes of a man of letters; a room in disorder, the furniture thick with dust, and a large table covered with open books and unfinished manuscripts. Paine himself was dressed in a manner that corresponded to this disorder, but the wit in his works showed in his face."

They dined that evening at the home of James Wilson, the lawyer, and they thought it well that Mrs. Wilson retired after dinner, for the men were gay and the stories

rather racy. Mr. Peter, the Minister of War, gave the signal of liberty by singing a song so *risqué* that Chastellux would not set it down, or even give an extract from it. Afterwards, Mr. Peter sang another song, "more chaste and more musical," not of his own composition, a very pretty Italian *cantabile*.

XXVII

The Marquis, however, did not allow social duties to absorb his interest. He had acquired the fatal taste for politics, and Philadelphia was the place to indulge it. He had arrived at a critical moment. The military campaign had closed, and no decisive blow had been struck. It had been made without a shilling; Washington had not even enough money to send his dispatches by express, and had to rely on the public post. The only hope was that France would send more money and more men. Congress was considering Arthur Lee's complaints of Silas Deane and Franklin. Izard was trying to discredit the French alliance and bring about a return to English rule. Pamphlets fluttered about the town, lampooning Washington and Franklin. The anti-Gallican faction proposed to recall Franklin, and unable to muster enough votes for that, they sought to impose on him a colleague who would checkmate him at Versailles. Vergennes had been so delighted by John Adams's recall that he had written him a too cordial letter of adieu, which the sly patriot on his return to Philadelphia had used so cleverly with his friends in Congress, that they sent him back at once to Paris. Young Rochambeau was on the way, but this was not enough; another envoy must be sent to Versailles. There were two candidates for the mission, Hamilton and young Laurens, and in the contest that arose the Marquis took an active part and was busy for

days buttonholing delegates on behalf of Hamilton. Young Laurens spoke French well, but, notwithstanding this, he was chosen almost unanimously.

The Marquis went back to the army which had gone into winter quarters at New Windsor. No year of the war had ever opened quite so gloomily as that year of 1781; Washington's army was dissolving before his eyes, and the faithful old Continentals, whose courage and patience the Marquis thought sublime, were shivering in the dead of winter in log huts under the snows, without clothing or equipment or food or pay. Some of the Pennsylvania troops, driven to desperation or bribed by British agents, mutinied, and after the Marquis and Anthony Wayne had tried conciliatory methods, Washington used stern measures and ordered three of the ring-leaders shot.

The French forces were blockaded in Newport by the English fleet. Ternay had died of grief, and had been succeeded by the Chevalier Des Touches. Rochambeau, in despair, was writing hopeless letters home. The British controlled the seas; Clinton was impregnably established at New York; Cornwallis held Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia. Congress was divided into factions so wolfish that they could not dine together, or speak to one another in the street. Vergennes, off there in the palace at Versailles, was appalled by the spectacle, and wrote of the United States as "a country where jealousy is in some sort the essence of government."

La Luzerne reported to him:

> There is in Congress, my Lord, a party of which M. Samuel Adams is the soul. This delegate has made for himself a system of jealousy, of distrust and suspicion that leads him to believe that they had better be exposed to the dangers of prolonging the war than to those of any influence internal or external. He is

persistently trying to alarm the people against General Washington, and the more popular the services of this commander render him, the more dangerous M. Adams considers him. . . . A few days ago, after a small dinner, one of his followers poured out a violent declamation against the General, saying that distrust was the guardian of republics, that no man was safe from the temptations of ambition, that his real or apparent virtues were only so many demerits the more, that he had voted against every motion to widen the powers of the General, and would do as much in any circumstances; and that they must be wary of a man who attracted general attention.

No wonder that Washington sometimes lost his temper, and now and then was sharp with those about him. One day, at headquarters, the Marquis was standing on the stairs talking to Hamilton when the General passed and said to Hamilton that he wished to speak to him. Hamilton replied that he would wait on him at once, but continued to converse with the Marquis a few moments longer. When the young aide went to Washington's room, as he told the Marquis later, he found His Excellency angry.

"Colonel Hamilton," he said, "you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes; I must tell you, Sir, you treat me with disrespect."

"I am not conscious of it, Sir," Hamilton replied, "but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part."

"Very well, Sir," the angry Commander-in-Chief retorted, "if it be your choice."

The Marquis gave Laurens letters to Adrienne and all his friends at Paris. Washington prepared a statement of the needs he was to present at Versailles, and wrote a long letter to Franklin in which he made no effort to conceal the fact that if more aid were not forthcoming from France, the disastrous end of the war for independence was not far off.

XXVIII

Benedict Arnold, with his thirty thousand dollars and his commission as colonel and brevet-brigadier in the British army, was in command of a garrison of two thousand men at Hampton Roads. Thomas Jefferson, Governor of Virginia, had asked for help, and as nothing could have given more satisfaction than the capture of the traitor, Washington proposed to Rochambeau that a combined expedition of land and sea forces be sent against him. The conditions were favourable; a storm had severely damaged the British blockading squadron, and Des Touches agreed to send out his fleet. Rochambeau was to place a force of twelve hundred French troops on board, under the command of the Baron de Vioménil. Washington, on his side, ordered the Marquis to take a detachment of twelve hundred men, most of them of his own Light Infantry, and to march to Head of Elk, thence to sail down Chesapeake Bay, effect a junction with the French and, joined by General Baron von Steuben, to capture Arnold and bring him back to the waiting and impatient gallows.

The Marquis assembled his command at Peekskill, marched it in the winter rain over wretched roads to Morristown, picked up some troops there, passed through Philadelphia and on March 3 was at Head of Elk. But disappointment was punctually waiting for him; no transports were there, and no news of the French. He had expected a French frigate to convoy him down the bay, and Washington had sent instructions not to leave Head of Elk until he was certain that "our friends are below." The Marquis had no illusions about the disposition of those friends; jealousy, as the disenchanted Vergennes had said, might be the essence of government in America, but it was a powerful

motive in France as well, and he knew that the gentlemen of the fleet had no intention of adding to his glory.

"From what I hear of the difficulties to convoy us down the bay," he wrote to Washington, "I very much apprehend that the winds will not permit any frigate to come up. Count de Rochambeau thinks his troops equal to the business, and wishes that they alone may show their zeal and shed their blood. . . . Baron de Vioménil will also want to do everything alone. . . ."

But having been in the land of pioneers long enough to learn to shift for himself, he got together a few small American vessels under Commodore Nicholson, and resolved to risk transporting his troops. The tiny fleet dropped down the bay to Annapolis, and he went on in a small boat to find the French squadron. He reached Yorktown on March 14, and there had word that a fleet had dropped anchor inside the Capes. It must be Des Touches; he was sure of that; everything was turning out capitally; he had only to bring down his Light Infantry, and Portsmouth, with Arnold, was his. But it proved to be an English, and not a French fleet that had arrived. Des Touches had delayed and lost his chance, and Admiral Arbuthnot, hearing that the French fleet had left Newport, had put to sea, overtaken Des Touches at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay, attacked him at once and forced him to run back to Newport.

There was nothing for the Marquis to do but to get his troops back to Head of Elk. He was preparing to march to New Windsor, when he received orders from Washington to go to the relief of Greene in the Carolinas. The change in plan was a disappointment; he knew that Washington was contemplating an attack, in conjunction with Rochambeau, on New York, and he wished to take part in it. But the scene of war, though he did not realize it at that mo-

ment, was shifting to the South; Cornwallis, after his successes against Greene, was swooping down on Virginia, and Clinton, jealous of his success, and even more jealous of his favour with the government in London, had sent General Phillips with a force of two thousand men to take command in Virginia. When Washington learnt of these movements, he determined to prevent the junction of Cornwallis with Phillips and Arnold. The Marquis set out, got his troops over the river, and then—mutiny again.

All along the way his men had been deserting. It was not only the old, incurable complaint, a want of clothing and boots; a new one had arisen; his men were all from New England and did not wish to go south; they disliked the people and the climate; they would rather have a "hundred lashes than a journey to the Southward." The Marquis issued an order of the day, in which he said that they were setting out on a difficult and dangerous expedition, to fight an enemy far superior in numbers; as for himself he was determined to carry out this purpose, and he hoped that they would not abandon him, but if any wished to fall out of ranks, it was not necessary to commit the crime of desertion; any one who wished to go need only apply, and he should have a pass, and be sent to join his regiment in winter quarters. No one asked for a pass, and no one deserted.

The Marquis marched to Baltimore, where a ball was given in his honour. There he induced the ladies of the city to make shirts for his command, and the young bloods to form a troop of voluntary dragoons to join the expedition. And from the merchants of Baltimore he borrowed, on his own note of hand, two thousand guineas to furnish his men with shirts, overalls, hats and boots.

No more mutiny now; the men of the Light Infantry, in their new overalls and new boots, marched away to Virginia. The Marquis left his tents, artillery and heavy luggage under guard, and started in light marching order. It was April 19 and spring in Virginia.

On the 21st he was at Alexandria; the men were already in high spirits and he wrote to Washington, "their honour having been interested in this affair . . . murmurs, as well as desertions, are entirely out of fashion."

On the 25th he was at Fredericksburg, where he had news that General Phillips had landed near Petersburg, and was coming up the James River, burning buildings on the way. Richmond, with its vast warehouses bursting with tobacco and rich stores of food and rum, was the goal, and it was a race to see who should get there first. The Light Infantry pressed breathlessly on; the next day he was at Hanover Court House, and entered Richmond on the 29th, just in time to save the city and the stores.

Phillips was furious. It was not the first time that he had been opposed to a La Fayette; in the battle of Minden he had commanded the very battery that fired the cannon ball that killed the Marquis's father, and when he learnt that the youngster had beaten him to Richmond, he flew into a rage, retreated down the river and began to hector the Marquis in blustering letters. He charged the American army with having

> fired upon the King's troops by a flag of truce vessel. . . . You are sensible, sir, that I am authorized to inflict the severest punishment in return for this bad conduct, and that towns and villages lay at the mercy of the King's troops, and it is to that mercy alone you can justly appeal for their not being reduced to ashes. . . . I shall willingly remit the infliction of any redress we have a right to claim, provided the persons who fired from

the flag of truce vessel are delivered into my possession, and a public disavowal made by you of their conduct. Should you, Sir, refuse this, I hereby make you answerable for any desolation which may follow in consequence.

The Marquis replied to the ferocious Phillips:

The style of your letters, Sir, obliges me to tell you that, should your further favours be wanting in that regard due to the civil and military authority in the United States, which can not but be construed into a want of respect to the American nation, I shall not think it consistent with the dignity of an American officer to continue the correspondence.

There was no truth, as the event proved, in Phillips' charge that the Americans had fired on a flag of truce, and the Marquis so informed Phillips. This was the last of their correspondence; a few days later Phillips fell ill of a fever and it was reported in the American camp that he had died. The command of the troops would thus devolve anew on Benedict Arnold. The Marquis crossed the James, and was in camp at Wilton, when a British officer came under a flag of truce, with a letter relating to an exchange of prisoners, signed by Benedict Arnold. The Marquis asked the officer if it was true that General Phillips was dead; the officer said that it was not, and the Marquis declined to receive a letter signed by any one but the British commander. The officer returned the next day with the same letter and said that he was now at liberty to acknowledge that Phillips was dead and that Arnold was in command. The Marquis returned the letter unopened, with a message saying:

From regard to the English army, he made use of the most polite pretence for declining all correspondence with the English

general who is at this moment commander in chief. But he now finds himself obliged to give a positive denial. In case any other English officer should honour him with a letter, he would always be happy to give the officers testimony of his esteem.

Arnold, stung by the Marquis's refusal to correspond with him, returned an answer in which he threatened to send all American prisoners to the West Indies, unless the Marquis agreed to an exchange, but the Marquis continued to treat him with chilling contempt. Washington was delighted. "Your conduct upon every occasion meets my approbation," he wrote, "but in none more than your refusing to hold a correspondence with Arnold."

With the arrival of Cornwallis at Petersburg the Marquis found himself in a grave position. Here he was, with less than a thousand Continentals, a body of fifty horse—those young bloods from Baltimore—and some raw militia, opposed to the best general in the British army, outnumbered five to one and answerable for the fate of Virginia. No wonder he was a little dismayed! He fully expected to be beaten, but he wrote to Hamilton that he was

determined to be beaten with some decency. . . . Their command of the waters, the superiority in cavalry and the great disproportion of forces, gave the enemy such advantages that I durst not venture to listen to my fondness for enterprise. To speak truth I was afraid of myself as much as of the enemy. Independence has rendered me the more cautious, as I know my own warmth. But, if the Pennsylvanians come, Lord Cornwallis shall pay something for his victory.

He was distressed by Hamilton's quarrel with Washington, and thought that Hamilton had been precipitate in quitting the staff, but if he had returned to the line, the Marquis wanted him. "Come here, my dear friend," he

wrote, "and command our artillery in Virginia. I want your advice and your exertions."

Lonely and apprehensive, he wrote to Noailles at Newport:

None of my friends in the North, except General Washington, sends me any news; if they do not know any more about what concerns us, I fear that I shall be judged severely, even unjustly; if I am wrong, I ask nothing better than to be blamed and I shall pardon condemnation of my want of talent, my want of experience and even of both at the same time; but as my disproportion is immense and our difficulties inexpressible, I hope that you will communicate to our friends all that you know about them, so that if I am condemned, I shall not be condemned more than I merit. If you write to France, *mon ami,* give them news of me, for there are hardly any chances of doing so from this country; tell them that your poor brother-in-law is devilishly busy getting himself licked.

He had other troubles besides, of a personal and gallant nature, some echoes of the affair at Paris with the Countess d'Hunolstein, which had excited the jealousy of the Duke de Chartres.

I have something to tell you about the spiteful treatment that has been accorded to a person whom I love; the result of that pleasantry will very likely be to render her forever unhappy and to bring me to daggers drawn with a man against whom I can only, in all conscience, half defend myself; but the society of Paris will console itself for this with a song, for private troubles touch it only lightly; it is rather annoying that they should come to search me two thousand leagues from Paris to be the hero of the gossip of the hour, and a woman who is two thousand leagues from the coquetries and intrigues of Paris, to make her the victim of some wicked imagination; write me, my dear brother, if they talk to you about it in jest, or if really they make of it a serious scandal.

Had he followed his first impulse he would have risked an engagement, and had it over, but he was trying to discipline himself to be prudent. And well he might, for Cornwallis, among his overwhelming number of troops, counted a splendid body of cavalry, eight hundred strong, under the dashing Tarleton, all of them mounted on thoroughbred hunters and racers, stolen for him by negroes from the horse-racing gentry of Virginia, and with them Tarleton rode hell-for-leather, scouring the country "like swift birds of prey, seizing upon everything they could find."

> Were I to fight a battle [he wrote to Washington], I should be cut to pieces, the militia dispersed and the arms lost. Were I to decline fighting, the country would think itself given up. I am therefore determined to skirmish, but not to engage too far, and particularly to take care against their immense and excellent body of horse, whom the militia fear as they would so many wild beasts. . . . Were I anyways equal to the enemy, I should be extremely happy in my present command, but I am not strong enough even to be beaten.

The Pennsylvanians to whom he had referred in his letter to Hamilton were the revolted troops of that state whom Wayne was to bring to his support; the Marquis thought that Wayne was on the way, and he sent back urgent appeals for him to make haste. Cornwallis was already on the march against him, and with his whole force crossed the James River at Westover. The Marquis's men intercepted one of his letters, in which his lordship wrote: "The boy can not escape me!"

XXIX

But the Boy had grown up. He placed his stores in safety and, abandoning Richmond, started northward in light

marching order, Cornwallis at his heels. Dodging, doubling and turning, like a fox with hounds in full cry after it, he manœuvred skilfully, bivouacking in the Virginia woods at night, fighting a rear-guard action now and then, and made his way by June 7 to the Raccoon ford of the Rapidan, where on June 10, Wayne, coming down the road from Fredericksburg, arrived with three regiments of the Pennsylvania Line, which sounded well, but meant nine hundred men.

Cornwallis, who had not been able to catch the Boy, or even to prevent his junction with Wayne, had turned aside from Point of Fork, near Elk Hill, towards the west, and had sent Tarleton's horse to break up the session of the House of Burgesses at Charlottesville; Tarleton pounced down upon the legislators so suddenly that he captured seven of the honourable members, and almost made a prisoner of Thomas Jefferson, standing on a hill at Monticello, calmly looking through a spyglass to see if he could distinguish redcoats in the town. Cornwallis also sent young Colonel Simcoe with a force of the Queen's Rangers, a regiment recruited among American loyalists, to attack Baron von Steuben, who was guarding the military stores at the Point of Fork, on the James. Simcoe drew up his men on the river in a manner so imposing that the old Prussian thought it was Cornwallis's whole army, and at night abandoned his stores, climbed into his sulky, and beat a precipitate retreat.

After the junction with Wayne the Marquis felt himself strong enough to take the offensive. He turned eastward, and to his surprise and mystification Cornwallis fell back before him. Could it be possible that this meant retreat? Warily, he moved to the North Anna, crossed at Brock's Bridge, and thence through Louisa County to the South

Anna River and, on the 12th, was at Boswell's Tavern. And there he found himself in a tight pinch; he wished to reach the highway leading to Charlottesville and Staunton, whither the stores had been removed, and place himself between Cornwallis and this inviting plunder. But if he took the main road, his flank would be exposed, and Cornwallis would catch him. However, he found an old abandoned road through the woods, and that night with his whole command he stole silently through the dark pines, and reached Mechneck Creek, fifteen miles west of where the British lay, and between them and their stores. The road was called "the Marquis's road" after that.

There six hundred mounted riflemen joined him. Things were looking better. Cornwallis, after having moved about pretty much as he pleased over the chess-board of those intersecting roads and streams, now turned towards the east, in short, began to retreat towards Richmond. The Marquis did not quite understand it, but he resolved that he would not allow Cornwallis to turn west again. Baron von Steuben in his sulky, smoking his long pipe, at the head of a tatterdemalion mob of newly levied militia, joined the main army, and the Marquis now had a little more than five thousand men, two thousand of whom were hardened Continentals, and six hundred crack shots of riflemen.

He began to dog Cornwallis's heels, now and then skirmishing with his rear-guard, but taking care not to get near enough to risk a battle. The Americans were not encumbered with much baggage in any event; nearly all they had was in rags on their backs, but such baggage as they had was left behind, and in those warm summer nights they lay on the ground in the thick woods.

Cornwallis evacuated Richmond on the 21st; the Mar-

quis passed through the capital on the following day; Cornwallis retired to Bottom's Bridge, the next day to New Kent Court House, then to Byrd's Ordinary, and by the 25th was at Copper's Mills, twenty miles from Williamsburg. The Marquis sent Wayne forward, and Wayne's advance guard fell on the Queen's Rangers; the Marquis mounted his infantrymen behind his riflemen, each horse carrying double, and got up a force sufficient to engage in a lively skirmish. His men were in exuberant spirits; Cornwallis had evidently given up the conquest of Virginia, and was racing towards the sea, after having been led by the Marquis an exhausting and fruitless chase of eleven hundred miles.

The Marquis sent to Washington a modest report that concealed his joy in the brighter prospect opening before him; he had, to be sure, many problems and difficulties; small-pox was raging in Virginia—the slaves that Cornwallis's men carried off from Thomas Jefferson's plantation at Monticello died of it—and the Marquis had to avoid infected grounds when he selected a camp. And then, the militia were going home again; harvest time had come and they must get in their crops; the war would have to wait. "You might as well try to stop the flood tide," he wrote to Governor Thomas Nelson, "as to stop militia whose times are out."

Jefferson had resigned the governorship in order to give the post to a soldier, and Nelson was raising militia to aid the Marquis. He had very little cavalry, and no sabres for the little he had; he thought of arming them with lances, "which, in the hands of gentlemen, must be a formidable weapon." He had no heavy artillery; everything needed for a siege, from guns to entrenching tools, was wanting, and not to be found that side of Philadelphia; clothing, boots,

arms, dragoon and horse equipment, ammunition, medicines and hospital stores, all had to come from the North, when they came at all. The weather was excessively hot and the troops were worn out. Nevertheless, on July 4, a wet morning, clearing at ten o'clock, they had a *feu de joie* to celebrate the Independence of the United States and after that was over the Pennsylvania Line performed some fancy manœuvres.

Lord Cornwallis, on his side, celebrated the Fourth by moving out of Williamsburg to the James River. He encamped at a ford leading to James Island, sent the Queen's Rangers over, and on the next day all his baggage, intending to cross with his main body.

Then a negro came into the Marquis's camp and said that the entire British army had crossed the river except Tarleton's legion and a small detachment of infantry. And so Wayne, with Major MacPherson's cavalry, some volunteer dragoons and riflemen and three pieces of artillery, advanced to a plantation known as Green Spring Farm, and attacked in that impetuous way which had won him his nickname of Mad Anthony. Cornwallis kept his main army concealed, and Tarleton drew Wayne on. The Marquis, however, riding up, observed that as fast as pickets were killed or driven in others instantly replaced them, and, his suspicions aroused, he rode out on a point of land that projected into the river; and there were the red-coated columns, hidden a short distance from the river bank, at Ambler's Plantation, under protection of the guns of British ships in the river—waiting to attack his army when he should bring it up. He galloped back to tell Wayne, but Wayne, seeing a gun that the enemy had left exposed as a bait, dashed forward to capture it. Then the red line attacked, and the skirmish became a battle. The Marquis

brought up his troops, and they fought until nightfall, he himself in the thick of it; one of his two extra horses, ridden by a groom at his side, was killed, and the other wounded.

Then Cornwallis withdrew farther towards the sea, and went to Portsmouth, and there, following some mysterious purpose, began to embark his troops. The Marquis was puzzled—as he had been ever since Cornwallis so abruptly abandoned the chase at Point of Fork—and wrote a private letter to Washington.

> A correspondent of mine, servant to Lord Cornwallis, writes on the 26th of July, at Portsmouth, and says his master, Tarleton, and Simcoe are still in town; but expect to move. The greatest part of the army is embarked. . . . My lord's baggage is yet in town. His lordship is so shy of his papers that my honest friend says he can not get at them. . . . Should a French fleet now come in Hampton Road, the British army would, I think, be ours. . . . I am going to send a flag to Lord Cornwallis. I owe him justice to say, that his conduct to me has been peculiarly polite, and many difficulties between commissaries very graciously adjusted by him to my satisfaction.

He supposed that Cornwallis was embarking for an expedition up the Chesapeake to Baltimore, and he warned Washington to that effect. But Cornwallis did not go to Baltimore. He sailed round to Yorktown and Gloucester, and disembarked his army. The campaign of Virginia was over, and the Marquis had Cornwallis bottled up at Yorktown, where he could be relieved only by sea.

XXX

When the news reached headquarters in the North the Marquis's popularity was greater than ever and his repu-

tation in the army vastly enhanced. To have defeated Cornwallis, the best general in England, was a feat that wrung praise even from Rochambeau. "M. de La Fayette," he wrote to Vergennes, "has twice bitten the rearguard of Cornwallis with the successes balanced. He has conducted himself perfectly in his Virginia campaign."

But in the calm that had settled down on his camp at Malvern Hill, the Marquis was already tired of inaction; the old restlessness and dissatisfaction assailed him, and he began writing those letters, so familiar by this time to Washington, in which he asked to be allowed to return to headquarters. He had no news of the world outside; what was the General doing? How was he getting on with crusty old Rochambeau? What had young Rochambeau accomplished at Paris? And Laurens? And when was the General going to make the famous attack on New York? He feared that he should not be with his General when he made the final movement to end the war. It was maddening, this inaction, this ignorance of all that was happening in the world.

The slow weeks passed; and then, one day, from the headquarters bag Poirey drew out a letter from the General at Dobbs Ferry. The General wrote that if the Marquis were to return to headquarters just then there would be no available command to give him; he was of far greater service where he was and it would be to his own advantage to remain. The General dared only hint at the possibility of operations in the Southern States, but since the Marquis knew that a French fleet might one day arrive, he said significantly: "Your penetration will point out my meaning, which I can not venture to express in direct terms," and promised to be more explicit in a later dispatch. There

was nothing to do but wait; a soldier had to spend so much of his time in waiting, and that was the hardest thing in all the world for him to do! He moved his headquarters to the Forks of the York River, tried to settle down, watched Cornwallis and drilled the militia. He waited a whole month of the hot, enervating Virginia summer. August was nearly gone, and then, one day, a courier arrived with a dispatch from Washington, who wrote from Dobbs Ferry:

The *Concorde* frigate has arrived at Newport from Count de Grasse. He was leaving San Domingo the 3rd [13th] of this month with a fleet of between twenty-five and twenty-nine sail of the line, and a considerable body of land forces. His destination is immediately for the Chesapeake; so that he will either be there by the time this reaches you, or you may look for him every moment. . . . You will take measures for opening a communication with Count de Grasse the moment he arrives, and will concert measures with him for making the best use of our joint forces until you receive aid from this quarter. . . .

Aid from this quarter! There was a prospect then of troops coming as well as ships, and in that case a chance of doing what he had already hinted to Washington, that is, capturing the whole of Cornwallis's army! But Washington had enjoined secrecy; he must not even write the great news to Wayne.

In the present state of affairs, my dear General [he wrote to Washington], I hope you will come yourself to Virginia, and that if the French army moves this way, I will have at least the satisfaction of beholding you myself at the head of the combined armies; . . . Adieu, my dear General, I heartily thank you for having ordered me to remain in Virginia, and to your goodness to me I am owing the most beautiful prospect that I may ever behold.

A few days later Du Portail arrived with all the news; Washington and Rochambeau had had a meeting at Weathersfield; frigates had been careering back and forth between Newport and the West Indies; the armies and the fleets were to unite and take Yorktown; they had stolen a march on Clinton; the French army had moved out of Newport and the Americans out of White Plains; Clinton, whose spies had captured the headquarters dispatch bag with plans for an attack on him, had assumed that the movement was against New York, and had hastened to improve his defences. He could send no reinforcements to Cornwallis now. Washington and Rochambeau were on the way—two thousand old Continentals, four thousand French, Lauzun with his legion of horse; Barras was coming round with his fleet, and Grasse might be expected any moment.

The Marquis sent Gimat to Cape Henry to watch for Grasse's fleet, and decided to move his troops forward from Malvern Hill to be on the scene when the French disembarked. It was September, and on the 2nd, a Sunday, the Light Infantry marched sixteen miles, and were so excited at the prospect of uniting with the French that when Wayne came to camp that evening to see the Marquis, one of the sentries lost his head and gave Wayne a load of buck-shot in the thigh. On Monday morning the Marquis's drums beat the assembly at daylight, and after marching eight miles the troops were halted, and ordered to bathe, put on clean shirts, and smarten up as well as they could, before uniting with the French.

But they did not see the French disembark; the fleet had arrived before the Light Infantry could get there, and landed troops on James Island, three thousand tall French soldiers, in cocked hats and uniforms faced with blue, white small-

clothes and long leggings, smarter looking troops than those tough, leathery men of the Marquis's Light Infantry, whose red and black plumes were somewhat bedraggled after that hot summer of dodging about in the swamps and pine woods of Virginia, and those half-wild riflemen from the backwoods.

The French troops were under the command of the Marquis de Saint-Simon, a soldier older in years and experience than the Marquis, but—the age of miracles having dawned, and the luck of Washington having turned at last—Saint-Simon waived all question of rank, and offered to serve under the Marquis. This touched his heart, and never, in all his life, had he been so proud as when Saint-Simon's division passed into his command and he had three *maréchaux de camp* under his orders.

The Marquis and Du Portail went at once on board the *Ville de Paris,* the flagship, and saluted the portly Admiral on his quarter-deck. They found him worried and anxious; he had been terribly disappointed when Gimat told him that Washington and Rochambeau were not there ready for business; he must be back in the West Indies by October 15, there were the equinoctial gales to fear, to say nothing of the British fleet under Admiral Graves. So anxious was Grasse indeed that he urged an immediate attack upon Cornwallis. Saint-Simon added his pressing appeals, and the two of them argued that, after such a long and fatiguing campaign, ending as it had in the discomfiture of Cornwallis, it was only fair that the Marquis should have the glory of the final surrender. Grasse offered to send him, in addition to the forces already at James Island, all the marines he had, about fifteen hundred, and as many sailors as the Marquis might ask for. But they did not know the Marquis's devotion and loyalty to Wash-

ington, nor that the hot-headed young rebel of the house of Noailles was growing a little wiser; in spite of his temperamental impatience, he refused to touch the fruit until it was ripe. He wished to see Washington at the head of the combined armies, wished him to have the credit of the victory, and he argued that they must wait until Washington and Rochambeau, and Barras with his fleet, could come up and invest Yorktown, and bring about its surrender, not by a murderous and bloody assault, but in the orthodox manner, by the gradual approaches of a regular siege. Du Portail added his representations to those of the Marquis, and Grasse yielded.

The Marquis and Du Portail came ashore; and Du Portail sent off a messenger to Rochambeau, saying:

"Venez vite, mon Général, venez vite!"

XXXI

Three days later Admiral Graves appeared in Chesapeake Bay, looking for the French fleet. Grasse slipped his cables and went out of the bay, and off the Capes the two fleets fought from four o'clock in the afternoon till dark, when Graves drew off badly disabled and gave up the effort to relieve Cornwallis, who had been looking out across the bay for reinforcements to arrive by sea, the only side from which help could be expected any more.

Grasse came back a week later to find that, during his absence, Barras had arrived with his fleet. They were only waiting now for Washington and Rochambeau.

In the meantime everything fell on the shoulders of the Marquis. He was busy day and night, with no time for sleep, in spite of chills and fever and constant headaches. Food was scarce, the country had been stripped bare by

the two armies, and by hordes of riff-raff which, under the names of "refugees" or "loyalists" followed the English army; the soldiers of Saint-Simon were in want of flour, meat and salt. The Americans lived on corn bread, which the French did not like, and no wonder. The Marquis gave orders that no flour should be issued to the Americans until the French had received three days' rations; his officers divided their mounts with the French officers, and he seized the horses of country gentlemen for the hussars. The country gentlemen were indignant.

Then he received a letter from Washington, once more at Mt. Vernon, after an absence of seven years. From Head of Elk he had sent the army on ahead to march along the shores or sail across the wide reaches of Chesapeake Bay and with Rochambeau and Chastellux and their staffs as his guests he had gone home by way of Baltimore, riding a hundred and twenty miles in thirty-six hours. There, for three days, looking out from his verandah on the noble view of the Potomac, he had entertained his guests with Virginia hospitality. And now he wrote to say that he and Rochambeau should be at New Castle on the 13th and that he hoped to see the Marquis at his headquarters at Williamsburg the day after.

It was good news for the Marquis, and a good tonic for the ague. Saint-Simon had come to pay him a visit and was there when, on the afternoon of the 14th, an express arrived to say that the Commander-in-Chief and the Count de Rochambeau were approaching. They rode into camp at four o'clock, while cannons roared salutes and the two armies turned out on parade. The Marquis and Saint-Simon met Washington and Rochambeau, and all the generals rode down the lines, with their staffs cantering after, inspecting the French and Americans, and then passed them

in review. The officers of the French army attended at the Marquis de Saint-Simon's quarters and were presented to Washington, and that evening all the superior "officers supped together in the utmost harmony and happiness," while a French band played airs from a French opera.

The next day the Marquis gave a dinner to Washington and Rochambeau and invited all his friends who had come in with the advance guard—Noailles, commanding a battalion of Grenadiers in the regiment of Soissonnais, young Rochambeau, just back from France with news of all the Marquis's friends, commanding a battalion of the Bourbonnais, and the gay Lauzun with his legion.

They told him of their long march from Newport—Washington and Rochambeau riding on ahead to Philadelphia to make preparations to transport the troops to Yorktown. The four divisions of the army, one after another, had arrived in the first days of September, and had had a joyous reception. Philadelphia for once was gay; the streets were filled with laughing, dancing crowds, and men clinked glasses with the soldiers. The troops were reviewed by the President of Congress, and the regiment of the Soissonnais gave an exhibition drill; nothing so amazing had ever been seen, even in Philadelphia; the regiment was vastly and, as Noailles felt, justly, admired.

But Washington, under all his calm, had been anxious; they had had no news of Grasse and the fleet; members of Congress, of course, were criticizing him for leaving White Plains; but while he was sitting at a dinner of eighty covers given by La Luzerne—with crowds cheering in the street before the Legation—a report came that Grasse had arrived. The two generals had galloped off to Head of Elk; and at Chester, at three o'clock in the morning, Washington found the Count de Saint-Cézare waiting with dispatches

from Grasse, informing him that he and Barras with their combined fleets were in Chesapeake Bay, had landed three thousand troops and were waiting. Lauzun and Guillaume de Deux-Ponts, with a number of the French officers, were standing by; they watched Washington, for whom Lauzun came as near feeling awe as he ever did for anything in life; and as the General read his dispatches, all of a sudden, they saw a kind of miraculous transformation take place in him; the mask of gravity fell away, a smile slowly spread over the solemn face and, as the enormous load of care and responsibility that had burdened him for those seven long years and made him old and grey, rolled from his shoulders, he became a boy again, and seeing Rochambeau waved his hat excitedly and ran to tell him the great news.

Two days later Washington and Rochambeau, with Chastellux, Knox and Du Portail, went aboard a corvette and sailed out to the *Ville de Paris,* to pay their respects to Admiral de Grasse. They went on board to the salute of thirteen guns, and spent the afternoon. Grasse agreed to defend Chesapeake Bay whilst the land forces reduced Yorktown, and Washington came ashore happy; it had all been a miracle; for once fleets and armies had been able to keep a rendezvous; for once his troops outnumbered the enemy; and here they were, ready to take the army of Cornwallis.

But Washington was no sooner back at headquarters than he found an express from the North informing him that the English Admiral Digby had arrived at New York with six ships of the line. Rochambeau sent an aide to Grasse with this intelligence, and the Admiral returned a letter to say that, in these circumstances, he would leave Chesapeake Bay at once, in order to fight, if he must, in

the open sea, and that he might not be able to return. Washington, recognizing this old familiar *contretemps,* wrote one of his impressive and solemn letters to the Admiral.

To bear his letter he chose the Marquis, long accustomed to undertaking these delicate missions to French admirals who became jumpy at the mere mention of English fleets. The Marquis went out to the flagship, delivered the letter, made his own arguments and pleas; the apprehensive Admiral, who never, up to the very last, had any hope of victory, and had to be buoyed up constantly by the resolute and imperturbable Rochambeau, called a council of war, at last decided to stay and the Marquis returned ashore with one more feather in his cap.

XXXII

With the arrival of Washington, the Marquis's independent command came to an end, his forces were absorbed in the main army and he became a division commander. The last of the allied troops arrived, and on September 28, Washington moved the whole army forward from Williamsburg to within two miles of the little town perched upon the bluffs of York River, now suddenly to be lifted out of the obscurity of a sleepy provincial village into the bright conspicuousness of history. The Marquis was commanding the advance guard on the right wing, and he had under him Alexander Hamilton and John Laurens. That day, in the glitter of an October sun, they drove in the enemy's pickets and horse, and in a skirmish with some of Tarleton's dragoons, the gay Colonel Scammel, whose songs and stories used to make the Father of his Country chuckle at mess, was taken prisoner, and killed by a brute of a Hessian,

who, after Scammel had surrendered his sword, ran him through with a bayonet.

By morning the English had withdrawn from their outer works. The allies worked for a week like nailers, French and Americans vying with each other in the enthusiasm that men always show in labours of destruction. All the apparatus of a regular siege was at hand; siege guns were disembarked and mounted; all was ready; the investment was begun while Cornwallis was still looking out across the hazy waters of the bay, waiting for his rival Clinton to come to his relief.

On the night of October 6 Du Portail and Quérenet were ready to open the first parallel, drawn within six hundred yards of the enemy line; the night was black, and a gale was blowing; the Marquis with his Light Infantry and the Count de Vioménil, who commanded the French on the Marquis's left, protected the sappers, and the artillery kept up a bombardment that caused the English to withdraw their cannons from their embrasures.

On the night of the 10th the second parallel, within three hundred yards of the enemy's lines, was opened. Washington himself touched off the cannon that began the bombardment. The guns roared and thundered all day and all night. Shells rose screaming overhead, and burst, trailing long streams of fire; Governor Thomas Nelson himself aimed a gun at his own house, in which Cornwallis had fixed his headquarters. A thick black cloud of smoke hung over the beleaguered town, lit up by a red glare and pierced by rockets soaring with a harsh, angry swish, in graceful, fiery curves. Shells and red-hot shot from the mouths of seventy guns fell into the town, and into the river, among the British ships lying under the bluffs. A shell set fire to the *Charon,* lying at Gloucester Point; flames wrapped

the masts and shrouds, and in the glare of fire, common things stood out in a queer distinctness, with some new and unsuspected significance, mysterious and appalling. But there were two redoubts on the enemy's left from which the British could rake the second parallel with an enfilading fire, and gall the men working in the trench almost under the palisades.

Washington and Rochambeau decided that these redoubts must be stormed and taken at any cost. The Marquis was ordered to take one of them, and the Baron de Vioménil the other. The assault was to begin at eleven o'clock on the night of October 14. The Marquis had four hundred picked men from his Light Infantry, and he chose Gimat, Hamilton and John Laurens to lead them, giving Hamilton command of the advance. In Vioménil's force was a detachment of Grenadiers from the regiment of Gätinais, drawn from the old regiment of Auvergne; its device had once been *Auvergne sans tache,* but had been taken away. It was the old regiment of Rochambeau, and in the evening of the assault he went into the trenches and in his paternal way said to the men:

"My children, if I have need of you to-night, I hope that you have not forgotten that we served together in this fine regiment of *Auvergne sans tache,* an honourable surname, which it has deserved ever since its creation."

The Grenadiers cried that if he would give the regiment back its name, they would die for him to the last man.

Vioménil, just as the movement was about to begin, observed to the Marquis, with a sarcastic sneer on his handsome face, that he had doubts whether the Marquis's Americans would be equal to such a daring operation.

The irritated Marquis retorted sharply:

"We are young soldiers, and in such a case have no other

tactics than to fire our guns, and then go straight in with the bayonet."

At eleven o'clock that night his storming party were huddled in the trench; it was a cold night of drizzling autumnal rain; they feared that they could not keep their musket-pans dry; but the Marquis was going to trust to the bayonet that night. . . . The men waited, nervous and impatient, huddled there in the dark trench.

And then, suddenly, a rocket from their own camp rose above them, exploded with a soft detonation, and showered balls of coloured flame; then six bombs—the signal to storm.

The Marquis gave the word. The sappers were to have gone forward first to cut away the abatis of felled trees and the palisades, but the men ran forward faster than the sappers, Hamilton leading them. Rockets went up from the British works, revealing everything in their white light, and then Bengal fire blazed red, and in this illumination the men rushed the stockade, fairly tore it down before the sappers could swing an axe; Gimat was wounded, but they pressed on, floundered through the ditch, scrambled up towards the parapet; Hamilton climbed up on the shoulders of his men, gained the crumbling parapet, and leapt down into the redoubt, his men after him. Then the wild confusion of hand-to-hand fighting, in the red glow of the Bengal fire—a struggling mass of men, swearing and cursing in English, in French, in German; burly Hessians swinging the butts of their guns with a grunt; an angry captain from New England, furious over the murder of Colonel Scammel was threatening Major Campbell, who commanded the redoubt, and had surrendered; Hamilton struck up the captain's blade, just in time. In ten minutes it was all over, and the Americans had not fired a shot.

Off to the left, the French were still fighting to conquer the other redoubt. The Marquis sent Major Barber to Viomenil with a message:

"The Marquis de La Fayette's compliments, and if the Baron de Viomenil requires any help, he should be glad to send American troops to his assistance."

But presently he heard a familiar shout:

"Vive le Roi!"

And he knew that the Grenadiers of the Gätinais had taken their redoubt.

The taking of these two redoubts sealed the fate of Cornwallis. The next day he tried a sally, but Noailles and his battalion of Soissonnais drove back the Guards and Grenadiers led by Lieutenant-Colonel Abercrombie. The day after he tried to escape by boats across the York River to Gloucester Point, but the attempt failed. On the 17th Washington and Rochambeau were preparing for a general assault when, at ten o'clock in the morning, a drummer all in red stood forth on the only bit of parapet remaining and beat a parley. He could not be heard at first, for the fury of the cannonading, but at last some one saw him, and the firing ceased. An English officer appeared and the chivalric Lauzun, stepping out across the space between the lines, bandaged the officer's eyes with his lace handkerchief and led him into the American lines. The officer bore a letter from Lord Cornwallis to Washington, asking somewhat ambiguously for a suspension of hostilities to discuss terms of capitulation; Washington sent the officer back with a refusal, saying that he would consider only a surrender, and ordered the firing to be resumed. At four in the afternoon, another parley; this time it was surrender. Young Laurens, Noailles and the Commandant de Granchain of the fleet, were named on the part of the Allies and Lieu-

tenant-Colonel Dundas and Major Ross, on the part of the British to arrange the terms. The commissioners met at Moore House on the other side of Yorktown and drew up the articles.

In his proposals for capitulation, Cornwallis had included the stipulation that the garrisons of York and Gloucester should give themselves up as prisoners of war "with the customary honours," that is, they should march out with colours flying and drums beating. Washington and Rochambeau were willing to concede this. But not the Marquis; for once he was not so generous as it was his nature to be. He reminded Washington of the way in which the unlucky Lincoln had been treated when he surrendered Charleston; had not the English forced him to march out with colours cased, and forbidden his music to play a British air? The Marquis insisted on mild reprisals, and urged that the British be ordered to march out with colours cased, and forced to play either a British or a Hessian air. He had his way, as he generally did, with Washington.

On Friday morning, October 19, Washington sent the articles to Cornwallis, saying that they must be signed before noon, and that at two o'clock the troops must begin to defile and lay down their arms. The articles were signed, and at noon the saucy young flag of the United States was flying over the redoubt that the Marquis had stormed and taken on Wednesday night, whilst the white flag of the regiment of Auvergne, with its device, *Auvergne sans tache,* restored, was flying proudly over the redoubt captured by the French.

XXXIII

Early that afternoon the allied armies were formed on the barren plain that sloped down from Yorktown along the

Hampton road. At the extreme right of the American line, at the post of honour, the ragged men of the Light Infantry stood now at ease, leaning on their rifles, and in front the Marquis, his restless white horse fidgeting about, was laughing and chatting, a little excitedly, with the officers of his staff—La Colombe, Pontgibaud, Nevill, McHenry, Poirey and the young Major George Washington, nephew of the General. Far along the line that swept away to his left towards the York River were the French regiments, each with its two flags, the white banner of the King with the *fleurs de lys,* and the regimental standard of its own colours, drooping from their staffs, in the sunlight of the still October afternoon.

It was nearly two o'clock; Washington and Rochambeau, with their staffs, cantered out to their place in the middle of the line; Washington sitting his horse superbly, very grave and reserved.

People from the barren and desolate countryside, having watched for three weeks the cloud of black smoke that hung over Yorktown by day and the flames that lit up the skies by night, had crept forth now that the thud of the guns was stilled, and gathered in a crowd to see the spectacle. The crowds and the long line of troops waited; restless horses fidgeted; necks were craned and eyes looked towards Yorktown to see Cornwallis. The Marquis stole glances in that direction, anxious to have, at last, a look at that unseen adversary with whom he had been fencing all summer long in the gloomy pine woods and swamps of Virginia. The long lines, with the drooping flags, grew suddenly still and immobile in expectancy, with the theatrical consciousness of participating in a spectacular and historic event.

At last, out of the town, down the Hampton road, came a column of red; bayonets glinting in the sunlight, strains

of music in the crisp October air. It was very still; Washington had issued orders that there be no cheering, no exulting over a conquered foe. The red column came down the road; the band, with the English sense of humour, was playing the old English tune, "The World Turned Upside Down."

The column came on, English, Scotch and German, and as it drew near and passed along the American lines, Guards and Grenadiers, their faces ruddy in the reflection of their red tunics, turned their glance contemptuously away from the line of ragged rebels to whom they were surrendering, hiding their mortification in this humiliating ceremony under an expression of what the French recognized as *la morgue anglaise.*

But where was Cornwallis? The Marquis looked—but the man riding at the head of the column could not be his lordship; no; it was General O'Hara, riding there as Cornwallis's representative. O'Hara rode up to Rochambeau, saluted with his sword and then presented its hilt to him. The Count bent slightly in his saddle and waved him towards Washington. O'Hara rode up to Washington, they exchanged salutes and O'Hara begged the General to accept the excuses of Lord Cornwallis who was ill and unable to appear. The Commander-in-Chief listened with grave courtesy; he trusted it was nothing serious. Then O'Hara presented his sword, but Washington waved him towards General Benjamin Lincoln, who had surrendered to Clinton at Charleston. And O'Hara was forced to hand his sword to Lincoln, who took it—the only time he ever received a surrendered sword, for he had never won a battle—and immediately gave it back. The sullen troops marched past, shuffling up the dust, laid down their flags, stacked their arms. . . .

After the ceremony was over, Washington, Rochambeau and the Marquis sent each one an aide-de-camp to present their compliments to the Marquis of Cornwallis, and Washington invited him to dine with him that evening; but Cornwallis refused, and accepted to dine with the Baron de Vioménil instead.

Washington sent Colonel Tilghman of his staff galloping off to Philadelphia to carry the news to Congress, whilst Rochambeau detailed the Duke de Lauzun and Count Guillaume de Deux-Ponts to announce the victory at Versailles, and then retired to write his dispatches and, more important still, draw up the list of officers to be decorated.

The aide-de-camp by whom the Marquis sent his compliments to Lord Cornwallis was the young Major George Washington, who reported that Cornwallis wished to give General de La Fayette a private account of the motives that had forced him to surrender; his lordship evidently had had a discussion, or something more than a discussion, with his superior, General Sir Henry Clinton.

The next day, with all his interest and curiosity alive, the Marquis rode into the battered town of York to call on the antagonist whom he had never seen. He found Cornwallis reserved, almost shy, with an Englishman's embarrassment in making an acquaintance. The approach was not quite happy; Cornwallis thought to cover the first difficult moment by saying, in a tone of confidence that had its compliment for the Marquis personally, but its fling at the Americans:

"I am aware of the humanity of the French towards prisoners, and I recommend my poor army to you."

The Marquis, who never could have been so good an American had he not had his dose of American touchiness, recalled to Cornwallis the treatment that Burgoyne had

received after Saratoga, and replied in his haughty way: "You know, Milord, that the Americans have always been humane towards captured enemies."

Cornwallis naturally did not like to leave the Marquis under the illusion that his defeat was due to the Marquis's superiority as a strategist; and he told him somewhat more than he had hinted to young Washington the day before; in fact, began to explain and to elucidate for the Marquis the mystery of the hurried retreat. At Williamsburg, on July 4, he had received an order from Clinton to transform his offensive into a defensive campaign, and to take his post in some maritime place, such as Gloucester or Yorktown. Cornwallis obeyed, wrote to Clinton asking to be relieved of his command and suggesting that Clinton come to Virginia and himself carry on the campaign. To this suggestion Clinton replied in a tone of raillery, as one who took a malicious satisfaction in the misfortune of a rival, and only made his orders the more positive. Cornwallis received the order at Portsmouth and went to York.

Had Clinton been jealous of his clever subordinate ever since the successes in the South, or of Cornwallis's influence at Court, his intimacy with Lord George Germaine? Had there been to him something not altogether disagreeable in the idea of Cornwallis's campaign failing, and in the orders that made that failure complete and irremediable? The Marquis did not know, but he rode away wondering just how much this fact, when it became known—and something of it was already in the gossip of the French officers' mess—would detract from the glory he had won in his Virginia campaign. He could not tell, of course. At any rate, it provided the flaw that so ironically and so inevitably mars the perfections of all moments of great happiness.

XXXIV

Grasse detached two of his swiftest frigates to carry the news to France; Lauzun was to sail in the *Surveillant,* and Deux-Ponts with duplicates of the dispatches, in the *Andromaque.* Everybody began writing letters home; the Marquis dashed off one to the old Count de Maurepas:

The play is over, Monsieur le Comte; the fifth act has just ended. I was a little embarrassed during the first acts; my heart rejoiced greatly in the last, and I have no less pleasure in felicitating you on the happy success of our campaign; I shall not give you the details of it, Monsieur le Comte, but leave that to Lauzun, whom I wish as much joy in crossing the ocean as he had in defeating the legion of Tarleton.

Chastellux had brought over a saying of Vergennes, who had wished that some one would cut for him a quill-pen sharp enough to bring about, by the letters he would write with it, the triumph of his diplomacy, and now the Marquis, recalling this, wrote to him:

Receive my compliments, Monsieur le Comte, on the fine quill-pen they have cut for your policies. M. de Lauzun will give you all the details. I am happy that our campaign in Virginia finishes thus well, and my respect for the talents of Lord Cornwallis makes his capture still more precious to me. After this attempt, what English general will get it into his head to conquer America?

Then he went on board the flagship with Washington and Rochambeau and their staffs to pay their respects to the Admiral, and incidentally to sound him about an expedition to Charleston to end the war. The ships of the fleet were all dressed in their signal flags, long pennants undulated from their mast-heads, the royal ensign flew from

their spinnakers, and as Washington went aboard the yards were manned and salutes were fired. Grasse gave a great dinner and the Marquis slept on board that night, staying over a day to persuade the Admiral to join them in the expedition to the Carolinas, and won, or thought that he had won, the Admiral's consent. Lauzun and Deux-Ponts were to sail away in their frigates that day on their race to France. The Marquis laid his bet on Lauzun, and had just time enough to write one more letter to Adrienne and give it to him as he went over the side to be rowed to the *Surveillant,* all ready to sail.

Grasse changed his mind about the expedition and sailed away to the West Indies. The fighting was over for the winter, and with Washington's consent the Marquis went to Philadelphia, where he applied to Congress for leave of absence. The permission was granted in a long, flattering resolution.

Washington had taken advantage of the calm after victory to spend a few days at Mt. Vernon, so that the Marquis did not see him again before he sailed. But he had a letter from him:

> I owe it to your friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear Marquis, not to let you leave this country without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct and other important services in the course of the last campaign, although the latter are too well known to need the testimony of my approbation, and the former, I persuade myself you believe, is too well rivetted to undergo diminution or change. . . . If I should be deprived of the pleasure of a personal interview with you before your departure, permit me to adopt this method of making you a tender of my ardent vows for a propitious voyage, a gracious reception from your prince, an honourable reward for your services, a happy meeting with

your lady and friends, and a safe return in the Spring to, my dear Marquis, your affectionate friend,

Go. Washington

Once more Congress placed the *Alliance* at his disposal, and with Noailles, Du Portail and Gouvion, he boarded her in Boston Harbour. Just before they weighed anchor, he wrote a last word to Washington:

on board the *Alliance,* 23 December

Adieu, my dear General: I know your heart so well that I am sure that no distance can alter your attachment to me. With the same candour, I assure you that my love, my respect, my gratitude for you, are above expression; that, at the moment of leaving you, I felt more than ever the strength of those friendly ties that forever bind me to you, and that I anticipate the pleasure, the most wished for pleasure, to be again with you, and, by my zeal and services, to gratify the feelings of my respect and affection.

CHAPTER III

GLORY

1781-1787 Aet.: 24-30

CHAPTER III

GLORY

I

TWENTY-FIVE days later the *Alliance* dropped anchor in the harbour of Lorient, a quick voyage, though not so quick as that of the *Surveillant,* whose amazing swiftness had accomplished it in eighteen days. Lauzun had got there just in time to bend over Maurepas on his death-bed, and tell him of the great victory; the old Prime Minister had smiled—and died. The Marquis scribbled a note to Washington to announce his arrival, to say that the surrender of Cornwallis had "produced a glorious effect" all over Europe and that France was rejoicing over the birth of a Dauphin. Then, with Noailles, Du Portail and Gouvion, he left by post-chaise for Paris. They arrived to find the streets filled with vast and voluble crowds shouting *"Vive la Reine!"* and cheering a royal procession of state coaches and King's troops on their way to the Hôtel de Ville to attend a fête in honour of the Queen and the Dauphin. When the crowd caught sight of the American uniform they began to cheer, and when they found out who it was, they danced about his carriage, shouting *"Vive La Fayette!"*

They gained the rue Saint-Honoré and the *hôtel* de Noailles to find none of the family at home; everybody had gone to the ceremonies at the Hôtel de Ville. There was nothing to do but to wait. But, on the mysterious magnetic currents of the crowd, the news went thrilling

through the noisy streets to the Hôtel de Ville, and straight to the ear of the Marquise. She turned pale, grew faint and fluttered in excitement. There was no way just then to get home; no one could leave before royalty. But the Queen noted her distress, and with a royal gesture placed one of the state coaches at her disposal. When the coach reached the *hôtel* de Noailles, the street and even the courtyard were filled with people; the Marquis, hearing the tumult, went out, ran to the coach just as Adrienne was alighting; she saw him, swayed and he caught her in his arms; and then, a true lady of the eighteenth century, she fainted.

He lifted the frail little figure in his arms and bore her indoors, whilst the crowd gave way to its emotions in tears and cried *"Vive La Fayette!"* again and again. And an hour later the fishwives from the Halles, in their best dresses, came trailing in a joyous band to the *hôtel* de Noailles to offer him branches of laurel.

The next day he had an audience of the King, who asked him a thousand questions about Washington. Everybody, indeed, was curious about Washington. When the Marquis dined at the house of the Marshal de Richelieu, with all the Marshals of France, they drank Washington's health and charged the Marquis to present their homage to him.

The King gave him the Cross of Saint Louis and promised him the rank of *maréchal de camp,* when he should rejoin the army, and as in that event the King would appoint some one else to the command of his regiment of Dragoons, it was arranged that the regiment should be given to Noailles, who paid the Marquis sixty thousand *livres* for it, and kept it in the family.

He went to the opera, tried to blot himself from sight at the back of the Noailles box; they were giving *Iphigénie*

en Aulide, and when the chorus began to sing "Achilles is crowned by the hands of victory," the audience applauded, and Mademoiselle Torlay, the star, advanced towards the box, holding out a wreath of laurel; the crowd went wild and the Marquis was obliged to advance to the front of the box and bow again and again. It was observed, however, that many of the young *talons rouges* did not join in the applause; already his triumph was exciting jealousy.

However, the tide of enthusiasm kept mounting, his name was greeted with applause in concert halls and vaudeville, a popular song celebrated him, though with a slight touch of Parisian mockery.

Dans les champs de l'Amérique
Qu'un guerrier vole aux combats,
Qu'il se mêle des débats
De l'empire britannique;
Eh! qu'est qu'ça m'fait à moi?
J'ai l'humeur très pacifique.
Eh! qu'est qu'ça m'fait à moi?
Quand je chante et quand je bois? [1]

Thus he was all the rage at Paris, the darling of society and a favourite at Court. Versailles just then was in fine excitement over the visit of the Count du Nord, the Empress Catherine's son, who later became the fantastic Emperor Paul I, and at the ball given in his honour the Queen, costumed that evening as *la Belle Gabrielle,* singled out the

[1] Literally,

That a warrior should fly to battle
On the fields of America,
That he should mix in the debates
Of the British Empire;
Eh, what difference does that make to me?
I have a very peaceful disposition.
Eh, what difference does that make to me,
When I sing and when I drink?

Marquis as her vis-à-vis in the *quadrille d'honneur*. And, as on his return from his first voyage to America, when he tasted for the first time the heady wine of popularity and learnt what glory was, the women went mad over him. The cynical old Duke de Choiseul, tired of hearing the ladies in his wife's *salon* rave over the hero, made a famous *bon mot:*

"For myself, Mesdames, I see in La Fayette only Gilles Cæsar."

But in all the brilliant throng that moved amidst the mirrored splendours of the palace at Versailles, there was one stately figure that held the Marquis's gaze, the Countess de Simiane. She was the most beautiful woman at Court, and gave the *ton* to society. The Queen consulted her as the oracle of fashion; her sway extended beyond the Court; many a young man had gone to America in order to win her approval; and now that they had come back from the great adventure, they crowded about her and laid themselves at her feet. She was a Damas, sister of that Charles, the Marquis's intimate friend, who had been in America with Rochambeau, and, like all the Damas, she was charming, gay and witty. The Viscountess de Noailles said that she had never heard any one speak of Madame de Simiane without enthusiasm. "It was impossible to receive her without giving a fête in her honour." Her kindness, her constant desire to please "produced about her a sort of magic effect. Her society was delicious."

And the Marquis won her heart, a conquest more difficult —so said the gallant old Duke de Laval—than that of the new liberty, whose principles were even then undermining the foundations of that society in which the Marquis was cutting such an astonishing figure. But the eighteenth cen-

tury still held its sway, and such a triumph would not have been complete without a romantic amour to crown it.

As for Adrienne, she cared no more for society than she had ever done; reared by the Duchess d'Ayen in a kind of pious seclusion, her tastes were like her mother's, and she was full of family cares. The infant George Washington was teething and very ill; and she had not recovered from all the alarms of the campaign of Virginia, which had been even greater than during his first campaign in America. Letters from Virginia had been scarce, and her only source of news had been the English gazettes, which represented his situation as desperate. Now that he had returned in glory, as the victor over Cornwallis, she was more than ever under the spell of his charm. Her feelings were so intense that for months she nearly fainted whenever he went out of the room, and fearing he would consider such devotion troublesome, she tried to hide her passion from him.

II

Vergennes, in very truth needed a well-mended quill to write the letters by which he was slowly bringing his policies to fruition in that spring and summer of 1782. It was apparent, even to George III, that the American colonies were lost to the British Crown; Lord North had fallen, Lord Rockingham had succeeded him at the head of a government of conciliation, with Charles Fox at the Foreign Office. Everybody was tired of the war and eager for peace, but Vergennes, in the great game he had to play, was embarrassed by his Spanish and Dutch allies. It would have been simple enough to arrange a peace between England and her revolted colonies, but there were Marie Thérèse and Joseph II trying to make Austria the arbiter of Europe,

Catherine II putting in the Russian oar, proposing a mediation that nobody wanted, and Spain demanding that Gibraltar be given back, and casting an eye on Florida and the Mississippi. It was old Franklin who cut the tangled knot. The Marquis was often at Passy—he was trying to secure the release of Cornwallis from his parole—and one day Franklin told him that he had an idea which he might communicate to Vergennes. It was an idea almost too simple to occur to a professional diplomatist, and not in keeping with the protocol: why should not he, Franklin, communicate quietly with Lord Shelburne? Shelburne was, in a way, of the same political school as Franklin; they would understand each other. Franklin's old friend, Lord Cholmondeley, was about to pass through Paris on his way from Nice to London, and would bear a letter to Shelburne. The Marquis saw Vergennes, and Vergennes thought the idea a good one—especially as it did not bind him, or engage his responsibility. Lord Cholmondeley came, and took a letter to London, and by April 16, Franklin was able to announce to Vergennes that Richard Oswald, a close friend of Lord Shelburne and Adam Smith, the political economist, was at Paris, ready to broach the ticklish business.

The Marquis had breakfast with Oswald at Franklin's house at Passy, and Oswald had an interview with Vergennes, but Vergennes was not quite satisfied with Oswald's powers, and Oswald returned to London to obtain more explicit authority. He came back accompanied by Sir Thomas Grenville. The preliminary conference began on May 9, and Vergennes, to show that it was a general peace that they were discussing, insisted that the Spanish Ambassador, Count d'Aranda, be present.

The Marquis had intended to return to America in the

spring, but these *pourparlers* caused him to delay his departure. He found the negotiations tedious and irksome, occupied as he was with his family, his friends, his affair with Madame de Simiane, his popularity and his career. He would have preferred to make, now and then, only swift and dramatic apparitions on the stage, treating the business with large and magnificent gestures, but he devoted himself to it, and if he did not attend all the sessions, he did toil behind the scenes, where, after all, the most important work was done, and, dining with Franklin at Passy, or playing *loto* in Madame de Vergennes's *salon* of an evening, he found ways to render services to the young nation that had become as dear to him as his own.

But the negotiations dragged on much too slowly for him; he was impatient to be off for America, where Ségur and a number of his friends had just gone.

One day Sir Thomas Grenville asked him when he intended to leave.

"I have stayed here, Sir Thomas," the Marquis replied, "longer than I should otherwise have done, to see whether we are to have peace or war; but as I see that the expectation of peace is a joke, and that you are only playing with us and have no real intention of treating, I shall wait no longer, but set out in a few days."

Sir Thomas assured him that they were very much in earnest and that four or five days would convince him of it.

Then Franklin fell ill of the influenza, which was raging all over Europe, and the Marquis replaced him in the conversations with Grenville at Versailles.

And then John Adams turned up once more, having been named as one of the commissioners with Franklin, John Jay and Henry Laurens, to negotiate peace. He had been in Holland ever since that day two years before when Ver-

gennes, losing patience, had written him a sharp letter to say that he could recognize no one but Franklin as the American Minister at that Court; but now he slipped back into Paris once more, and without calling on Vergennes, went to see Franklin, the accredited minister and chief of the delegation, and told him bluntly that in any difference with Jay—and Franklin had had many—he would side with Jay. He made no effort to conceal his dislike of Franklin or his antipathy to the French, and declared openly, wherever he went, that America owed France nothing and had no need of her. Vergennes had never changed his opinion that "M. Adams could only create embarrassment and make mischief because of his inflexibility, pedantry, insolence and self-conceit, which render him incapable of treating political questions."

When the Marquis heard from Vergennes that Adams had not called on him, and that Vergennes had learnt of Adams's presence only through the reports of the secret police, he went to see Adams and expressed his surprise, and so, a fortnight after his arrival, Adams paid the visit of politeness that he owed to Vergennes. Then Adams and Jay began secret negotiations with Grenville for a separate peace. The American commissioners had been instructed by Congress to consult the Marquis in all their negotiations, but they kept him in the dark as they did Vergennes.

The Marquis, just then, had domestic preoccupations; on September 17 the Marquise gave birth to a girl, whom they named Virginia. (Franklin wrote to express the hope that the Marquise would have children enough to name one after each state in the Union.)

Then one day Vergennes received a brief note from Franklin announcing that the preliminary articles had been signed. He was amazed and hurt that the representatives

of the States which he, by his diplomacy, had helped to gain their independence, should show him this discourtesy, and leave him in the lurch with the whole question of a European peace unsettled on his hands. It was a humiliation of which his enemies, not only in London, but at Versailles, were not slow to take advantage. Franklin sent him a copy of the articles and a few days later, with Henry Laurens, went to call on him, "excused himself and his colleagues as well as he could," and said that they had agreed to ask the English for a safe-conduct for the ship *Washington* to carry the preliminary articles to Philadelphia. Vergennes asked them to wait, which they agreed to do. After a fortnight of feverish diplomacy, Franklin sent a note to Vergennes to say that the *Washington* was sailing the next morning, and asked if Vergennes could not send more money to Congress.

And then the usually urbane Minister lost patience.

I am somewhat embarrassed, Sir, to explain your conduct and that of your colleagues with regard to us [he wrote to Franklin, and briefly recapitulating what they had done, concluded]: You are wise and prudent, Sir; you know the proprieties; you have done your duty all your life. Do you believe that you are fulfilling that which you owe to the King? I do not wish to pursue these reflections any farther; I leave them to your sense of decorum. When you have satisfied my doubts I shall beg the King to put me in a position to reply to your requests.

It fell to Franklin to get them out of the predicament which John Adams had got them into. He wrote to Vergennes admitting

that in failing to consult you before signing, we were guilty of neglecting a point of politeness; but, as it was not by any want of respect for the King, whom we all love and honour, we hope that it will be excused. . . . It is impossible to be more impressed

than I am by what every American, and myself particularly, owes to the King for the multiplicity and grandeur of his benefactions and for his goodness to us. . . . And I believe that no prince was ever more loved or respected by his own subjects than the King is by the people of the United States. *The English,* I have just learned, *flatter themselves that they have already divided us.* I hope, then, that this little misunderstanding will remain a secret and that they will be entirely mistaken in their expectations.

Vergennes was mollified, and a sum of six million *livres* was placed at the disposal of the States. And when Franklin wrote to Robert Morris to inform him of the fact, he put him on his guard against John Adams by saying "my apprehension that the union between France and our States might be diminished by accounts from hence was occasioned by the violent and extravagant language held here by a public person, in public company, which had that tendency. . . . Luckily here, and, I hope, there, it is imputed to the true cause—a disorder in the brain which, though constant, has its fits too frequent."

III

In the hope of forcing the issue, Vergennes, in concert with Madrid, determined on a joint expedition against England in the West Indies. The expedition was to be commanded by the Count d'Estaing, who asked that La Fayette accompany him as chief of staff. Estaing went on to Madrid, and when he proposed to Charles III that, after they had taken Jamaica, La Fayette should be placed in command, the old monarch threw up his hands in horror and cried:

"No! No! I don't want that! He would found a republic there!"

Before leaving to join Estaing the Marquis wrote to Ver-

gennes, pleading for an additional grant of money to the United States; Rochambeau's army was leaving America, prematurely, the Marquis thought; the people there were discouraged, and one last generous effort should be made to aid the Americans. He pleaded his cause so well that when, on Sunday, November 24, he went to Versailles to make his adieux, Vergennes promised him that the Americans should have another advance of six million *livres*. The next day, still wearing his American uniform, he left Paris for Brest and, towards the end of December, joined Estaing at Cadiz, the greatest merit of which city, he wrote to Madame de Tessé on New Year's Day, 1783, "is to be less Spanish than the other cities."

On that same New Year's Day he wrote to Vergennes, feeling that peace was farther off than ever. But peace came, at a moment when he least expected it. In February a courier arrived at Cadiz to report that the preliminaries had been signed at Paris, and the Marquis decided to jump aboard a frigate at once and be the first to carry the news overseas. But as he was about to do so, he received a letter from Carmichael, the American *chargé d'affaires* at Madrid, saying that he was in difficulties; the Spanish government would not recognize him, hardly treated him civilly, and he begged the Marquis to come to Madrid and help him out. The Marquis was disappointed; he wished to be in America with Washington in the supreme moment of victory. But he gave up the prospect, and induced Estaing to send the *Triomphe* with his letters to Washington and the President of Congress.

If you were not a man like Cæsar or the King of Prussia [he wrote to Washington], I should be almost sorry for you to see the grand tragedy in which you have played such a rôle come

to an end. But I felicitate myself with my dear General on this peace that fulfils all our wishes. Remember our time at Valley Forge, and may the memory of the dangers and the work past cause us each day to enjoy all the more our present situation. What pride and happiness I feel in thinking of the circumstances that led to my engaging in the American cause! As for you, my dear General, who can truly say that all that is your work, what must be the sentiments of your good and virtuous heart in this happy moment that affirms and crowns the revolution you have made! I feel that the happiness of my grandchildren will be envied them when they celebrate and honour your name. To have had one of their ancestors among your soldiers, to know that he had the good fortune to be the friend of your heart, will be an eternal honour with which they will glorify themselves, and I shall bequeath to the eldest of them, as long as my posterity endures, the favour that you have been good enough to confer on my son George. . . . At present, my dear General, when you are going to enjoy some repose, permit me to propose to you a plan that may become greatly useful to the black portion of the human race. Let us unite to buy a small property where we can try to free the negroes and to occupy them only as agricultural labourers. Such an example, given by you, might be generally followed and if we succeed in America, I shall with joy devote a part of my time to make that idea fashionable in the West Indies. If it is a bizarre idea, I had rather be judged a fool in that way, than to be considered wise on account of the opposite conduct. . . .

Estaing detached the *Triomphe,* the Marquis sent his valet on board with his letters, and then went to Madrid. He was presented to Charles III at the Pardo and, as he wrote to Madame de Tessé, "in spite of my title and uniform of a rebel, I was very graciously received." All the grandees were there with their hats on, but the rebel did not admire them. "I saw *les grands* very small, above all when they were kneeling, and there was in that act alone enough to make an independent head sneeze."

He had an audience of the Count de Florida-Blanca the next day; after the compliments had been duly exchanged, he brought the conversation round to American affairs, coolly declared that unless Carmichael were recognized at once, he would take him back to Paris with him, and in his lordly way, demanded an immediate answer. The Count, unused to such promptness, promised to go to the Pardo the next day. Two days later the Marquis returned with the Count de Montmorin, the French Ambassador, and Florida-Blanca, with Spanish procrastination, tried to put him off. It was Wednesday, and the Marquis took the liberty to say that he was leaving Madrid on Saturday and that the matter must be decided at once. It was finally agreed that Carmichael should present his letters of credence on Friday, and be invited to the dinner given to the diplomatic corps on Saturday. And then, as he was leaving, the Marquis said that his memory frequently had to be aided a little, and proposed to exchange letters resuming their agreement. The Count said that "his word was as good as his writings," but the Marquis insisted, wrote his letter, got the Count to write his reply at the bottom and had it back on Saturday before the dinner.

IV

That spring he went to Chavaniac. He had not been there for years; Madame du Motier had died, and Madame de Chavaniac, the last of her generation, was living in the old manor-house alone. It was on an afternoon late in March when his berline turned out of the village of Saint-Georges-d'Aurac and lumbered along the muddy road towards Chavaniac; a mile farther on, where the road turned, he had his first glimpse of the old stone manor, set solidly

on the hillside, under the cold, wet sky of March, with the dark pines behind. The berline climbed the hill; the vassals from the hamlet that huddled in squalor at the back of the manor, turned out with the *curé* to welcome their young lord, returned in such glory from those mysterious adventures across the seas. And there, in the wide doorway, was Aunt Louise-Charlotte, waiting to embrace the boy she had reared. The vassals raised a shout: *"Vive Monsieur le Marquis!"* and Aunt Louise-Charlotte led him into the hall, up to the vast *salon,* which, after having been closed so long, was now opened once more, with a great fire blazing in the wide chimney.

Things had been going badly at Chavaniac; the *château* needed repairs, but more pressing still was the plight of the people on his estates; the crops in Auvergne had been poor, and the outlook in that backward spring was discouraging; food was scarce and the peasants feared another failure of crops. But when the steward showed him over his estates, he found that the granaries of Chavaniac were full.

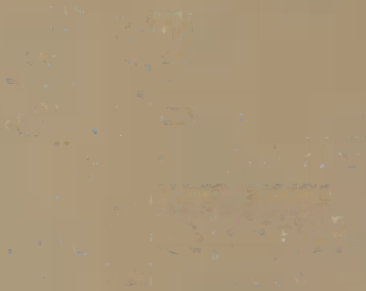
"Now is the moment, Monsieur le Marquis," said the steward with pride, "to sell your grain."

"No," said the Marquis, "it is the moment to give it away." And the grain was distributed among the poor.

All the notables of the region came to pay their court; Brioude and all of the towns around sent delegations to compliment him. When he visited Riom, the authorities of the town, a band of music at their head, accompanied by the sergeants of the *bourgeois* militia, came to offer him the wine of honour; the judges of the law courts came in their red robes to present their respects; the people embraced one another rapturously in the streets and cried *"Vive La Fayette!"*

CHÂTEAU DE CHAVANIAC

From "Le Château de Chavaniac-La Fayette," by Henry Mosnier.



As soon as he was back in Paris the Marquis realized the ambition that he had confided in a letter to Adrienne from America in 1778; he had a home of his own. He bought the mansion at No. 81 rue de Bourbon, near the corner of the rue de Bourgogne. It cost him two hundred thousand *livres,* and he spent a hundred thousand *livres* in addition to repair and furnish it. They established themselves there in May, and the Marquis hung up the Declaration of American Independence in the hall, with an empty space gaping significantly beside it. When his friends asked him what it meant, he would reply, "It is awaiting the Declaration of French Rights." That month of May saw many changes in the household of Noailles. Pauline married the Marquis de Montagu; the Viscountess de Noailles had another baby, a boy, whom they named Alexis; the Count du Roure, the indifferent and neglectful husband of Clotilde, had died that spring of the small-pox, not much regretted by the Noailles family, and Clotilde had come home to live; somewhat later, the aged chancellor, Agueseau, father of the Duchess d'Ayen, died.

At Chavaniac that summer—where the Marquise went for the first time—the Marquis had the satisfaction to learn, by a letter from Washington, that the Congress had had the first news of the peace in the letter that he had dispatched from Cadiz in the *Triomphe.* As for the Marquis's scheme to emancipate the slaves, Washington thought it "a striking proof of the goodness of your heart. I shall be glad to join you in such a laudable work, but I wait, to enter into the details of the affair, the moment in which I shall have the pleasure to see you."

Congress wrote to enlist his services in arranging the English debts, and in securing free ports for American com-

merce. The mysteries of vulgar trade and commerce were beyond him, and he was compelled to write to Vergennes to ask what a free port was. "A free port, Monsieur," Vergennes replied, "is a port from which one may export, and by which one may import, all sorts of merchandise, foreign and domestic, freely." And so he asked for free ports, and the government designated Bayonne and Dunkerque; but this was not enough, and he induced them to add Lorient and Marseilles, and when the news reached America, Congress once more voted him its thanks.

Then he was called upon to settle a question far more delicate than one involving mere commercial or political privileges. He was asked to designate the French officers to be decorated by the Society of the Cincinnati.

He assembled at his house in the rue de Bourbon those who, like himself, had served in the American army—Gouvion, Du Portail, La Colombe, Gimat and the rest—and pinned the golden eagles and the blue ribbons on their breasts; then they all went in a body, the Marquis at their head, to pay their compliments to Rochambeau and the officers of the French expedition and to them Major Lenfant presented the eagles, which he himself had designed. And then the Marquis's troubles began. Many officers had been left out; he was besieged with complaints and swamped by letters; some officers even offered to give money for the decoration. And then Conway turned up again, and, of course, there was another cabal. "My popularity is great in the realm and in this city," the Marquis wrote to Washington, in recommending that these demands be satisfied, "but among the great there is a numerous party against me, because they are jealous of my reputation; in a word, the whole of the pit is for me, but there is a

division in the boxes. A little plot has been woven to draw me into a snare, and to give us, you and me, an air of implacable vengeance against the man who is considered as having been ruined and abandoned by me in America." And to foil this plot, the Marquis thought that they had better give the decoration to Conway.

V

The definitive treaty was signed by the belligerent powers at Versailles on September 3, 1783; the world was at peace. The disgrace of the Seven Years' War had been avenged; the English commissioner had been withdrawn from Dunkerque, and the prolonged insult of his presence wiped out. What had been but theory in books and encyclopædias, or wit in the *salons* of Paris, had become reality in the new world. All the *Americains,* as they were called, had come back inoculated with the fever, not only the Marquis and Noailles, but the Dillons, Saint-Simon, Custine, Lauzun, Estaing, Ségur, even hard-headed old Rochambeau. Perhaps it was the air of America, the absence of formality and restraint, the familiarity, the free and easy manners, the devil-may-care life of camps that had affected them, or perhaps it was the imposing figure of Washington, who was fighting for independence and had no illusions about democracy, and never would have had the patience to read a page of Voltaire or Rousseau. At any rate, liberty and equality were the fashion; the golden age had dawned.

Everybody was happy over the result of the war, and Paris had never been so gay or so insouciant. Everywhere in France there was a new and prodigious activity. Calonne, the new Prime Minister, had restored confidence by creating the illusion of prosperity; the government was

lifting itself by its bootstraps—lavish expenditures, vast and luxurious displays, enormous loans from the bankers. Talleyrand, the Bishop of Autun, dryly remarked to La Fayette one day: "I was fully persuaded that the salvation of the State would be the work of that man, but I should never have believed that he could do it so quickly."

Oddly enough, a kind of Anglomania prevailed in society; English fashions were in vogue. The men organized clubs—little dreaming of the political uses to which, in a few short years, they would be put. They met there to play "wisk," to read the gazettes and the new books. Separated thus from the women, they became less frivolous, and less polite, adopted a brusquer manner, and were not so amiable; they talked politics. A certain simplicity was affected; the opulent curves and rococo ornamentation that had prevailed under Louis XIV and Louis XV gave way to the slender grace and chaste elegance of line that characterized the style Louis XVI. The heavy formality and rigorous etiquette at Court were relaxed; dress was simpler; even black was permitted.

Marie Antoinette received men at her table, the first time that a queen of France had ever done such a thing; she was in the full bloom of her beauty and at the summit of her popularity, the shining centre of all the fêtes at Versailles and Fontainebleau. She protected the arts, and encouraged literature, or at least smiled approvingly on the young courtiers who, like Ségur, scribbled epigrams. The blond romantic young Fersen, home from America, was more violently in love with her than ever, Lauzun and Noailles paid court to her and she was gracious to every one, even to La Fayette. She distributed charity with prodigality, gambled, lost vast sums at *loto,* spent money lavishly. And at that very moment, in the gardens of Versailles, the Cardinal

de Rohan was kneeling before the Countess de La Motte, thinking she was the Queen.

The King was ruled by his extravagant, pleasure-loving wife; his tastes were simple and *bourgeois;* he kept no mistress, ate enormously, drank too much wine, had no notion of what was going on, was full of good intentions, wished well to all the world, and lived in the blissful illusion that, by his victories, he had made all his people prosperous and happy.

And in fact they shared his illusion, and like the Athenians of old, were always running after some new thing, and mistaking change for progress. Charlatans flourished. Cagliostro, with his "occultism" was the rage in society, and Mesmer was inducting rich neophytes into the mysteries of "animal magnetism." La Fayette, readier than any one to take up with new fads, was his most enthusiastic adept.

"What will Washington say," Louis XVI asked him one day, "when he learns that you have become first apothecary's apprentice to Mesmer?"

When the Marquis wrote to Washington he promised to obtain from Mesmer permission to initiate him into the secret of the "great philosophical discovery," even though he was slightly sceptical himself. "I know as much about it as any sorcerer ever knew, which recalls to me the interview of our old friend with the devil at Fishkill, which made us laugh so much."

Washington, however, was more interested in the balloons of Montgolfier, the latest novelty in Paris. Immense crowds surged into the garden of the Tuileries to see the ascension of Charles and Robert; Louis XVI, who had no more faith in balloons than in mesmerism, forbade the ascension, but before the order could arrive the cords were cut and the reckless airmen flew away, in the midst of an

enthusiasm so great that Ségur burst into poetical raptures on the spot, and wrote more verses; everybody felt greater and stronger, ready to believe in any prodigy, even an invasion of England—by way of the air.

In America the army had been disbanded, and Washington had retired to the peace of Mt. Vernon.

> At length, my dear Marquis [he wrote], I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac; and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, far from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all, and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with a heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order for my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers.

The Marquis longed to see him again. He had urged Washington to visit him in Paris, but as the General would not leave Mt. Vernon, he wrote to ask him to say to Mrs. Washington that he expected "to thank her before long for a cup of tea at Mt. Vernon. Yes, my dear General, before the month of June is out, you will see a vessel come up the Potomac and your friend jump out of it with a heart palpitating with all the emotions of a perfect happiness."

The Marquise took her three children, and with the Duchess d'Ayen and Clotilde and Rosalie, went to Cha-

vaniac to spend the summer with Aunt Louise-Charlotte, and on July 1 the Marquis sailed from Brest on the *Courrier de New York,* taking with him as travelling companion the Chevalier de Caraman.

VI

On August 4 he entered, for the first time, the city at which during the war he had only been able to gaze from the other side of the Hudson. All New York was at the Battery when he landed, and the noise began. The boisterous crowds, the committee of reception, the open barouche, the escort of honour, the streets bedecked with flags and bunting, the people splitting their throats—this was what he liked best, and with large gestures and gracious smiles, he accepted all the homage with just enough of the air of a grand seigneur to make them feel that he was worthy of it.

After four or five exciting days lapped in this uproarious popularity, he went on to Philadelphia, and the glad noise continued—bells pealing from all the steeples, cannons belching salutes, more crowds, more hurrahs, more loud acclaiming of "the Marquis." At night the drab streets were illuminated in his honour, and the Assembly of Pennsylvania came in a body to present an address.

But he was impatient; there was one man he longed to see; he hurried on, and, at last, on the 17th, drove into the park at Mt. Vernon where Washington was waiting.

They spent eleven days together, riding about over the plantation in the drowsy heat of a Virginia summer, or sitting at the end of long afternoons on the wide verandah overlooking the Potomac, while Mrs. Washington made the tea. The General had not been taking enough exercise lately, and the Marquis urged him to ride oftener. There

was always company; the General was overrun with it. They sat down a score of them to the long table in the dining-room, while the negroes bore in the great platters of fried chicken and beaten biscuits. The Marquis was enthusiastic over Mrs. Washington's Virginia hams and liked her old peach brandy. The Marquis begged him to take a secretary, for the General had to slave long hours every day, answering with his own hand the letters that selfish correspondents wantonly poured in on him.

As statesmen they talked about the want of power in Congress, and the necessity of a strong federal government. They discussed slavery and the Marquis urged his plan of emancipation; Washington was sympathetic, but thought the time hardly ripe; how was one to work a Virginia plantation without negro hands? As farmers they talked of agriculture and of stock-breeding; the Marquis hoped to improve his land at Chavaniac. Washington wanted a jack-ass and, as there were none to be had in America, the Marquis promised to send him one from France.

And as soldiers they talked about their campaigns. They were bound by the strongest of all ties, the memory of common hardships and dangers shared, and those days, as they looked back upon them, took on the glamour that days of difficulty and excitement wear when they are irrevocably past. They had won through a war together to this peace, and almost regretted it. The Marquis, who had never known a father, sat there and looked at the General with a kind of filial adoration. In the many addresses that he delivered during his visit he invariably referred to himself as Washington's "adopted son." His political views were more radical than those of Washington, but personally he tried to form himself on Washington's model, and it was during those few quiet days of intimacy at Mt.

Vernon that he formed the ambition to apply to his own country and his own race, however temperamentally different to the Anglo-Saxon, the republican principles he had learnt from his hero and exemplar, in a word, to become the Washington of France.

It was hard to leave Mt. Vernon, and dreading the last good-bye, he promised to see Washington again before he set sail for France, and drove to Baltimore, where at a dinner of three hundred covers given in his honour at the Town Hall, an address was presented to remind him that he had saved the city during the Virginia campaign. He went to New York, where the city council gave him a banquet, and conferred upon him the freedom of the city.

Then on to Albany, where he found commissioners of Congress on their way to Fort Schuyler to make a treaty with the Indians. Remembering that the Marquis had been adopted by the Indians in 1778, they thought that he might be of help, and asked him to go along. He accepted the invitation gladly; the picturesque rôle of big chief, sitting with other chiefs around a campfire, smoking the pipe of peace, was irresistible. With the Chevalier de Caraman and Barbé de Marbois, he took a boat and went up the Hudson to Fort Schuyler. The Indians assembled for the powwow, welcomed Kayewla with hospitable grunts, and seated round a fire in a clearing among the pines, gave themselves up to oratory, in the solemn, metaphorical style of Indian rhetoric. King Louis was Ononthio, the sun; the French, their fathers; Washington, the great war-chief; the Americans, their brothers; and they were all the children of Kayewla who had come across the great lake to see them, to praise the faithful and to scold the erring.

The chiefs, in their coloured feathers, sat in a great circle round the fire, their blankets red against the dark back-

ground of blue-green pines; Kayewla stood in their midst and spoke.

Ocksicanehiou, chief of the Mohawks, replied:

"Let the ears of Kayewla, war-chief of the great Onon-thio, be open to hear our words! My Father, we have heard thy voice, and we rejoice that thou hast visited thy children to give them just and needed advice. . . . My Father, the words that thou hast spoken to-day will be published among the Six Nations."

The oratory rolled on for two days; Hoktawitchy, chief of the Hurons, pledged his tribe, and Towaneganda, chief of the Senecas, his. The Grasshopper, orator of the friendly tribes, presented to Kayewla the string of beads that Mont-calm, as a token of friendship, had given to the Indians twenty years before, and Kayewla gave it back, as a new pledge of peace. The treaty was signed.

Kayewla was so well pleased with his savage children that when he left he took one of them with him, a young brave named Ouekchekaeta, who would look well in the house in the rue de Bourbon.

He returned to Albany, visited Saratoga Springs, Hart-ford, Worcester and Watertown, and then made a triumphal entry into Boston, where, at a banquet of five hundred covers in the City Hall, they fêted the anniversary of the surrender of Cornwallis. He paid visits to all the towns about Boston, and then embarked on the French frigate, *Nymphe,* commanded by the Count de Grandchain, and sailed down to Chesapeake Bay to see Virginia again. Washington was waiting for him. At Richmond they stopped long enough for a reception by the House of Bur-gesses and then went back to Mt. Vernon. Together they visited Alexandria and Annapolis, and were received with great demonstrations; the Maryland General Assembly

voted that the Marquis and his descendants male should be forever citizens of the state. The Virginia House of Burgesses conferred on him the same distinction; Pennsylvania had called a new county, just erected beyond the Alleghanies, La Fayette, the first of all those counties and cities and towns and streets all over the continent that were to bear his name.

And then the hour for parting came; they were to separate at Annapolis, Washington was to return alone to Mt. Vernon and the Marquis was to go on to Philadelphia. There was a moment of sadness and of pain; Washington had written a letter to the Marquise, which he asked the Marquis to take to her; and then, since there was nothing more to do, he could only hold out his hand, say good-bye, and compress his lips. The Marquis saw how deeply the General was moved; he knew what the General was thinking; he was feeling it himself—and he flung his arms about those massive shoulders. He would come back the next year to see his dear General; he would come back every year. . . . But Washington shook his head ever so slightly; and then that grave kindly smile came to the noble face. . . . He saw the General to his carriage; the General paused, gave him his hand once more and got in. He leant forward to return the salutes of the curious crowd—and for one last look at the Marquis. The negro boy folded up the steps, slammed the door and sprang to the box. The black coachman in the capes spoke to his horses and drove away for Mt. Vernon. The Marquis stood a moment, watching the coach diminish as it lurched along the road, in the grey gloom of the November day, bearing the man who was to him friend, father and hero, and the greatest influence in his life.

He got into his own carriage and set out in the opposite

direction for Baltimore. He passed through that city and went on to Philadelphia, and on December 8 arrived at Trenton, where Congress was convened. A solemn session was held in his honour; a committee composed of thirteen members, one from each state, received him ceremoniously; the President of Congress delivered an address. The Marquis made a speech expressing his gratitude. "I confess that the first interest that I took in the cause was only, if I may so express myself, instinctive and involuntary. I was far from foreseeing all those bonds that were to attach me to the prosperity and glory of the United States, but I have seen the Americans do such things and display such great virtues that this attachment will endure as long as my life."

He went to New York, and on December 21, with salutes from the shore-batteries and the frigate, he boarded the *Nymphe* with Caraman, his servants and the amazed but stolid Ouekchekaeta. As the ship's boat was about to take him off a letter was placed in his hand. It was from Washington, feeling old at fifty-two:

My dear Marquis,

The day that I parted from you, my march ended at Wailbo. The next day, in spite of the bad weather, I reached home before dinner. In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connexion, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to say No, my fears answered Yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blest with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be intombed in

the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently to my prospect of seeing you again. But I will not repine; I have had my day.

The Marquis went into his cabin and wrote a reply:

My dear General, I have received your affectionate letter of the 8th, and as my heart knows your sentiments, so you will easily devine those that I felt in reading the tender expressions of your friendship. No, my dear General, our recent separation will not be a last adieu. My soul revolts at this idea, and if for an instant I could entertain such an idea, in truth it would make me unhappy. I realize that you will never come to France; I can not hope to have the inexpressible pleasure to embrace you in my house, to receive you in a family where your name is adored; but I will return, again and often, under the roof of Mt. Vernon; we will talk of old times. It is my firm intention to visit from time to time my friends on this side of the Atlantic, and the best loved of all the friends I have ever had, or ever shall have anywhere. . . . Adieu, adieu, my dear General, it is with inexpressible pain that I feel that I am going to be separated from you by the Atlantic.—All that admiration, respect, gratitude, friendship, and filial love can inspire, unite in my heart to devote it very tenderly to you.—I find in your friendship a felicity that words can not express.—Adieu, my dear General, it is not without emotion that I write this word, though I know that I shall return soon.—Take care of your health.—Give me news of yourself every month.—Adieu, adieu.

VII

The *Nymphe* dropped anchor in the harbour of Brest on January 20, 1785, and on his way to Paris the Marquis made a halt at Rennes where the Provincial Assembly of Brittany was in session. He could claim a certain interest in Brittany; his mother had been Breton by origin and he had

fallen heir to large estates in that province, though he had sold half of them to defray the expenses of his American adventure. In fact, that enterprise had cost him all of his income, and seven hundred and fifty thousand *livres* of his principal besides.

But he had no sooner arrived at home than he set out on a new crusade to free the Protestants of France from the disabilities under which they remained ever since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. While there were then no open persecutions, the marriages of Protestants were illegal; their children were considered as bastards; their testaments of no legal force; their persons fit only to be hanged.

It was no easy reform; it required a great deal of courage and audacity to undertake it, and it could never make its champion popular. Not that any one at Court was decidedly opposed to it; men there, like most men in those days, like La Fayette himself, while nominally Roman Catholics, were in reality deists, when they were not atheists. But such a movement might excite the opposition of the clergy, even the atheists among them. He broached the subject to Vergennes, but found no encouragement. On a pretext of discussing American commercial affairs he went to Nîmes and visited the rugged hills and gorges of the Cévennes, the "desert" where the Protestants had so long hidden from their pursuers. He saw old Paul Rabaut, dean of the Protestant clergymen, who had been the object of cruel persecutions, and talked long with him about the sufferings of his flock. When the Marquis confided to him his purpose the old "pastor in the desert" raised his hands and exclaimed, like Simeon of old: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!"

The Marquis pursued his investigations in the region,

prepared a dossier—that corner-stone of administration in France—and returned to Paris.

He got back in time to bid good-bye to Franklin, who, old and tired and ill, his work done, was turning over his Legation to Thomas Jefferson and going home. Houdon, the sculptor, going out to make a statue of Washington, was sailing with him.

Then the Marquis, restless as ever, was off again on his travels, this time to Germany, to see Frederick the Great, and witness the manœuvres of the Prussian army. He went officially, attended by a large staff; Du Portail and Gouvion, who had resumed their rank in the French army, Lieutenant-Colonel Count de Gaudricourt, Captain Marquis de Jumilhac and Dumesnil of the hussars. There was also a Colonel Smith, of the American army.

He stopped at Deux-Ponts to see an old friend, Prince Max, the future King of Bavaria, who had fought with him at Yorktown, and at Cassel he saw an old enemy, General Knyphausen. "Old Knip," still smoking his large meerschaum pipe, turned out his Hessian troops and the Marquis complimented him on their smart appearance. He arrived at Berlin in the last days of July, and was presented at Court by the French Minister, Count d'Esterno, had an audience of Frederick II at Potsdam, and made his court to the Queen at Schönhausen.

In spite of all that he had heard of Frederick the Great he could not help being struck, so he wrote to Washington, "with the figure of an old, decrepit and dirty corporal, all covered with snuff, his head almost lying on one shoulder, and his fingers nearly dislocated by the gout. But what surprised me much more, was the fire and sometimes the softness of the most beautiful eyes that I ever saw, which give to his face an expression as charming as it can be rude

and menacing when he is at the head of his army." He visited Prince Henry, brother of the King, in his castle at Rheinsberg; they struck up an instant friendship, and were together every moment. The Prince in his little theatre gave a performance of "Le Huron," which the Marquis said interested him "as a Frenchman and as a savage." From there he went to Breslau, in Silesia, for the manœuvres, where he found officers of many foreign armies, among them the Duke of York, second son of George III, and his old opponent in Virginia, Lord Cornwallis, with a brilliant staff. During the week that the manœuvres lasted, the Marquis and Smith often remarked to each other that, if they had been unsuccessful in the war, they should have cut a poor figure at these brilliant military displays, under the eye of the greatest captain in the world. The Marquis was lost in admiration before the spectacle. Thirty thousand men performed evolutions and were passed in review by the cynical old monarch, his shrunken breast blazing with decorations, even then smitten with a fatal illness and never to ride to reviews again. He sat, surrounded by officers of half the armies of Europe, and watched those giants of his guard stalk by like automatons in the goose-step, a perfect and dehumanized machine. The Marquis was enchanted, and wished that Washington could be there to see it.

In a way, Washington was there—a troubling spectre, for all Europe was curious about him. At table the King, with a malicious little chuckle, placed the Marquis between the Duke of York and Lord Cornwallis, and then, during the interminable repasts—they lasted three hours—plied him with questions about his campaigns in America. It was somewhat embarrassing, with Cornwallis sitting there beside him, but when the conversation turned on Washington,

his ardour was inflamed, and all his enthusiasm overflowed. In the course of a political discussion, he declared warmly that America would never have either royalty or nobility, and Frederick II fixed on him those wonderful eyes, with something of the rude and menacing expression they wore at the head of his army, and said:

"Monsieur, I knew a young man who, after having visited countries where liberty and equality reigned, got it into his head to establish all that in his own country. Do you know what happened to him?"

"No, Sire," replied the Marquis.

"Monsieur," said the monarch, thrusting his head out a little farther over the table, "Monsieur, he was hanged!"

At the end of August, when the manœuvres were over, the Marquis, accompanied by Gouvion, went to Vienna, and was presented at Court by his uncle, the Marquis de Noailles, now Ambassador to the Emperor Joseph II, and not so much embarrassed as he had been the last time his nephew had been a guest at his Embassy.

On his way back to Paris he stopped at Magdebourg to witness the manœuvres commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, and reached home at the end of October, to find a long letter from Washington that was somewhat damping to one just returned enthusiastic over so many marvels of military genius.

As the clouds that spread over your hemisphere are dissipated [said the General], and now that peace and all the good things that accompany it reign in your country, I wish to banish from my letters the word "war." I wish to see the young people of this world at peace, all busy and happy in fulfiling the first and great commandment: Increase and multiply. As an encouragement, we have opened the fertile plains of Ohio to the poor, the unfortunate, the oppressed of the earth. All those who are

overladen, broken down, seeking a soil to cultivate, may come and find the promised land flowing with milk and honey.

Ségur, on his way home from America, had stopped at San Domingo to visit a plantation that he owned there; and he brought back an account of the dissolute white society, and the tortures of his own unhappy negro slaves that made them all shudder in the house of Noailles.

The Marquis was indignant, and having no slaves of his own to emancipate, he at once bought some, in French Guinea, where he acquired a plantation near Cayenne, with the name of La Belle Gabrielle. There, without waiting for Washington, he would set the example of gradual emancipation. Adrienne and the Duchess d'Ayen were delighted, as they were with everything he did, and encouraged him in his quixotic enterprise, just as they had encouraged him in his plan for removing the disabilities of the Protestants, devout Roman Catholics though they were. He wrote to Washington to tell him what he had done—"you know it is my hobby-horse"—and then left the details of execution to Adrienne. The Marquise thought it best, before giving the negroes their liberty, to teach them the principles of religion and morality; she engaged the services of a priest in the seminary of the Holy Spirit, which order had a house at Cayenne.

When Washington heard of this latest scheme of the Marquis, he wrote to him: "The goodness of your heart, my dear Marquis, displays itself in all circumstances, and I am never surprised when you give new proofs of it. . . . God grant that a like spirit may come to animate all the people of this country! But I despair to be a witness of it. . . . A sudden emancipation would bring about, I believe, many evils, but certainly it could be, it ought to be, accomplished gradually, and by legislative authority."

VIII

In the beginning of the year 1786, La Fayette induced Calonne to create a commission of which he was a member, to examine the mercantile relations between France and the United States, and he proposed at once to abolish the government monopoly of tobacco, and to allow American tobacco to enter France free of duty—for tobacco was exempt from the privilege of the free ports. He was more successful in other efforts to obtain favours for American products—whale-oil, for instance, and when that autumn the inhabitants of Nantucket learnt of his devotion to their interests, they held a meeting and decided unanimously to give the milk from their cows for twenty-four hours to make a monster cheese, weighing five hundred pounds, to be sent to "the Marquis."

Such a cheese must have made a sensation when it appeared on the hospitable table of the house in the rue de Bourbon, if it ever got there, though it could not have been so greatly relished as the Virginia hams that Mrs. Washington sent him from Mt. Vernon. They arrived, a barrel of them, in perfect condition, with a letter from Washington to say that they had been cured at Mt. Vernon—"You know that the ladies of Virginia judge themselves by the goodness of their hams." He had intended to send a barrel of the old peach brandy, which the Marquis had liked so well, but he could not just then find any good enough. In any event, he said, with a wistful glance backward at their old days in the field together, "it would be more proper to serve after a long march in the rain than to figure on your table at Paris."

All the Americans and all the Englishmen of note—William Pitt among them—who came to Paris, dined at

his house in the rue de Bourbon. Ouekchekaeta, the red Indian whom he had brought from America, was there as a footman, wearing his native costume, feathers and all, and addressing the Marquis as "my Father." Everybody spoke English, even the two rosy little girls, Anastasie and Virginia, who, looking as though they had stepped out of English prints, were brought into the *salon,* made curtsies and talked and laughed with the Americans.

The young George Washington de La Fayette was not at home. Though only six years old he had a house of his own. His mother, concerned for his education, and "fearing that the great affairs and the public existence of his father with its inevitable distractions might harm him and give rise to feelings of vanity" had committed him to the care of the Marquis's old tutor, M. Frestel, and taken a modest lodging for them in the rue Saint-Jacques. She went every day to visit him, and to see her mother in the rue Saint-Honoré. Clotilde had married Monsieur de Thésan and was happy, and Rosalie was about to wed the Marquis de Grammont.

Thomas Jefferson, now at Paris as Franklin's successor, was a constant guest in the rue de Bourbon, and with his culture, his facility in French, his intelligent curiosity about everything, was a notable addition to French society. He had taken a town house with a court and garden at the corner of the Champs Elysées and the rue Neuve de Berry, and there the apostle of democratic simplicity lived in aristocratic elegance and received all the wit of Paris. The Marquis aided him in his mission and as Jefferson wrote to Madison, was a most valuable auxiliary to him.

His zeal is unbounded, and his weight with those in power great. His education having been merely military, commerce was an unknown field to him. But, his good sense enabling him

Photograph by Giraudon

THE THREE CHILDREN OF LA FAYETTE

ANASTASIE, GEORGE WASHINGTON AND VIRGINIA

From a Miniature in the Possession of M. Xavier de Pusy.

to comprehend perfectly whatever is explained to him, his agency has been very efficacious. He has a great deal of sound genius, is well remarked by the King, and is rising in popularity. He has nothing against him but a suspicion of republican principles. I think he will one day be of the ministry. His foible is a canine appetite for popularity and fame; but he will get over this.

The correspondence between the Marquis and Washington was constant, and they were always exchanging presents. The Marquis sent him, by John Jay, a painting of himself and his family. But Washington had not as yet received the promised jackass, and having written to Harrison, the Minister at Madrid, to send him one, Charles III had given orders that two, the best in his realm, be sent to Washington as a testimony of his esteem. Washington thought "such a mark of complaisance on the part of a crowned head most flattering," but the Marquis jealously saw in this royal generosity only "a new proof that Kings are good for nothing, unless it be to spoil everything, even when their intentions are good. Leaving your royal gift to become what it will, I have begged Admiral Suffren to procure me a jackass and two females, which will be next summer on the banks of the Potomac, and may it please God that I may be able to do the same."

The Marquis also procured from the Count d'Oillamson some of the famous foxhounds of Artois and sent them to Mt. Vernon, for Washington wished to improve the breed of his pack, and when the Countess d'Oillamson heard of the transactions, she sent her own favourite bitch to the General.

The asses duly arrived at Mt. Vernon, and were the subject of a sprightly correspondence between the Marquis and Washington, who loyally prized them more than the

gift of His Most Catholic Majesty. The Marquis sent pheasants and red partridges, and Washington sent more hams, and some ducks, but "the poor ducks were dead on their arrival at Havre." The Marquis begged him to send more, and some mocking-birds, as unknown in France as nightingales were in America.

He was in high favour at Versailles. When the Court went to Fontainebleau, he went along, and when the King went in state to inspect the new port of Cherbourg, constructed by the great engineer, Cessart, and one of the glories, perhaps the chief glory, of his reign, he invited the Marquis to accompany him; and the Marquis had no sooner returned from this triumph, than he went to Chavaniac, to take possession of his new seigniory of Langeac on the Allier, which he had just bought for one hundred and eighty thousand *livres*.

The marquisate of Langeac was one of the most important seigniories in Auvergne, and the gossips at the Palais Royal would have it that, in his ambition and his intimacy with the King, he aspired to a dukedom and was enlarging his domains in Auvergne with a view to erecting them into a duchy. Whether he wished to mount a step higher in the peerage or not, he went to Langeac with as much pomp as if he had already done so. A military escort came to Chavaniac to conduct him to his new estates, and, mounted on a white horse, he rode to Langeac, and took possession of his new fief with solemn ceremonies. The syndic and authorities of Langeac presented him with the keys of the city, and the wine of honour in sign of homage and avowal of seigniory; a high mass was celebrated in the old Church of Saint Gal and a *Te Deum* was sung. The people, delighted that they were to have such a generous lord, followed him in crowds, shouting:

"Vive Monsieur le Marquis!"

The fête closed with a banquet; bread and wine were distributed to the people; bonfires were lighted, houses illuminated and the magistrates joined in all the fun and played practical jokes. Whatever modern sophistication might be preparing at Paris, Auvergne, at least, was still of the old time when the people could give themselves over to the naïve gaiety of the French.

"It was roses, roses all the way," for the Marquis in those days, and he had to hasten back to Paris to be present at another celebration in his honour. For Houdon, having made the bust of Washington, had come back from America with a commission from the State of Virginia to make a bust of the Marquis to be placed in the Capitol at Richmond, and Jefferson wrote to the *Échevins* of Paris that the State of Virginia wished to offer a copy of the bust to the City of Paris. The bust was presented at the Hôtel de Ville by William Short, Secretary of Legation, for Jefferson had broken his wrist and was unable to attend the ceremony. The curious Parisian crowd, which liked nothing better than the solemn ceremonies by which public monuments were dedicated, unless it was tearing them down afterwards, turned from the *dénouement* of the Affair of the Diamond Necklace—Cardinal de Rohan exonerated of all charges except that of having made a fool of himself, Madame de La Motte publicly whipped and branded, Cagliostro freed—and ran breathless to the Hôtel de Ville to see the work of Houdon, and cheer the Marquis.

Thus, with his reforms, with society, with his popularity, he was happy. His fame was as wide as the world. Catherine the Great invited him to come to St. Petersburg to make her a visit, and he replied, asking permission to visit the Crimea; Catherine consented—she was just then going

to visit that part of her empire herself—and he made his plans to go there. He was to leave early in February, 1787. But, on December 29, 1786, the King convoked the Assembly of Notables. The Marquis did not go to the Crimea.

CHAPTER IV

THE REVOLUTION

1787-1792 *Aet.: 30-35*

CHAPTER IV

THE REVOLUTION

I

THE Assembly of Notables was an inspiration of Calonne, though not highly original since it was merely the old expedient of weak politicians when they come to the end of their tether—an imposing commisison to which their perplexities may be referred. He had laughed away anxiety, promised miracles, but it required something more than that to supply the insatiable demands of the profligate Court; do what he could, the all-devouring deficit demanded more. He thought of convening the States General, but such a thing had not been done since 1614, and now, it would be a fatal gesture of despair. The Assembly of Notables would be chosen by the King, and would have no powers, but it might make respectful recommendations and tell him how to raise the wind.

No one took it very seriously at first; the Parisians, with their incorrigible spirit of mockery, made a joke of it; if anything went wrong, if any one was at his wit's end, some one would remark, with an air of originality, "Convoke an Assembly of Notables." Thomas Jefferson chose this as the point of one of the few jokes he was ever known to attempt; "your head, my dear friend, is full of Notable Things," he wrote the Marquis from Nice. The Marquis himself made a bilingual pun, and called them the "not

ables." Nevertheless he was eager to be one of them, and his name was on the first list, and then, to his dismay, was struck off—on account of those wild notions he had brought back from America. But his friends, the Marshal de Castries and the Baron de Breteuil spoke to Calonne, and his name was restored.

The Notables assembled at Versailles on the morning of February 21, 1787, in the great hall with Doric columns that had been constructed for them in the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs, and the King opened the session. The members were divided into six bureaux or sections, each presided over by one of the King's brothers, or a prince of the blood. Monsieur presided over the first bureau; the Count d'Artois over the second, and it was to this that La Fayette was assigned. The confrontation of these two old friends, impersonations of the irreconcilable principles that were to close at last in tragic combat, made the second bureau the most interesting and significant of them all. The members gathered about the long green table, and as La Fayette spread out before them his whole stock of new ideas, the Count recoiled in horror and dismay.

The discussions turned chiefly, in the beginning, on the question of taxation; La Fayette knew nothing about taxation, except that the rich evaded *la taille,* whilst the poor were forced to pay *la gabelle.* His sympathies of course were always with the victims of any injustice, and he had long since been imbued with the general principles of the philosophic party. And now he came more directly under the influence of the physiocrats, that group of noble minds, Condorcet, Malesherbes, La Rochefoucauld and Du Pont de Nemours, disciples of Dr. Quesnay of the *Encyclopædia,* who founded the science of political economy and the school of modern liberalism. Their teachings clarified his

mind and gave him a sound philosophical basis for the altruistic feelings that had been instinctive and sentimental. In their school he was formed, and imbibed the ideas and principles that were to guide him in his life. They were glad to utilize his enthusiasm, his courage and his popularity to spread their liberal doctrines, and he was glad of their intelligent counsel. They were all his warm friends—he was especially intimate with La Rochefoucauld—and he consulted them constantly in all the steps he took in the Assembly of Notables. One way to meet the deficit, he said, was to reduce the expenditures of the royal household. He did not mention the Queen, whose dissipations had long been the scandal of Paris, but everyone knew whom he meant. And he suggested that some of the royal game preserves be suppressed; most of them were never used, and they supported a horde of idle favourites.

When M. de Nicolay, who, as President of the Chamber of Accounts, had seen millions of the public funds pass into the pockets of Court favourites, exposed certain fraudulent transfers of the royal domains, La Fayette moved that these transactions be recorded. The Count d'Artois turned black with rage, and at their next meeting announced that the King had been pleased to observe that, when such grave charges were made, they should be put in writing and signed by the author.

There was silence at the long table; everybody looked at the old President de Nicolay. But he kept still. Then La Fayette got up and said that he would accept the responsibility for the accusation, and asked permission to read a statement which he should beg Monseigneur to lay before His Majesty as coming from him. The Prince reluctantly nodded permission, and La Fayette began to read, but he had not gone far before the Prince interrupted him to say

that the tone of the document was too strong and too personal.

"Monseigneur," replied the Marquis, drawing himself up with his cold and lofty manner, "in my quality of *gentilhomme* I have the right to lay my representations at the foot of the throne!"

In the excitement of the moment one enthusiastic Notable cried out: "Your exploits in America have already placed you among the heroes; but it is now, above all, that you merit this glorious title! Why is it not given me to have an artist here who would carve your figure in this moment when your patriotic zeal places you in the ranks of the most faithful subjects of His Majesty?"

Then, in the stillness, with the men about the long green table leaning forward intently and the King's brother frowning disapproval, the Marquis went on to read his statement, naming several noblemen who had profited by the scandalous transactions. "The millions that are being dissipated are raised by taxes, and taxes can be justified only by the real needs of the State. All those millions abandoned to depredation or cupidity are the price of the sweat, the tears and it may be the blood of the people, and the number of poor people that have been sacrificed to make up the sums so lightly thrown away, is a most dreadful reckoning for the justice and the goodness that we know to be the natural sentiments of His Majesty."

No one had ever talked that way to the King before, and Versailles was outraged. Calonne advised the King to send La Fayette to the Bastille at once. But the King durst not; La Fayette had made himself too popular at Paris.

Perhaps it was just as well that the Assembly was taking a recess for the Easter holidays. La Fayette was in need of rest; the strain, the hard work, the excitement, the long

hours, had worn him out; he had caught a cold, which brought on an inflammation of the chest.

During the vacation the King, seeing how things were going, dismissed Calonne, and when the Notables reassembled M. de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, was Prime Minister.

Towards the end of the session the Marquis read another long statement prepared in consultation with Necker, Condorcet and Malesherbes. In closing he said that "as the simplification of the manner of raising taxes should deliver the State from the financial companies, whose engagements end in five years, it seems to me that we should beg His Majesty to fix that period as one in which accounts of all these operations should be rendered to him, and to consolidate the happy result of them by the convocation of a national assembly."

The last two words fell in the stillness of the room like a bomb. The Notables could hardly believe their ears; a national assembly—nobody had dared pronounce the words before! The Count d'Artois leant toward the Marquis in amazement.

"What, Monsieur," he cried out, "you demand the convocation of the States General?"

"Yes, Monseigneur," replied La Fayette promptly, "and even better than that."

"You are willing, then, that I say to the King: 'Monsieur de La Fayette makes the motion to convene the States General?' "

"Yes, Monseigneur."

The Count d'Artois could only stare in stupefaction. The room was very still; the silence was charged with the potentiality of a new and dangerous idea. . . . Something

"even better" than the States General. . . . A national assembly, that is, an assembly elected by the people! The Revolution had begun.

He had the satisfaction of seeing the Assembly recommend to the King several reforms that he had advocated. One was the creation of provincial assemblies, another the humane revision of the penal code and a third the restoration of civil rights to the Protestants.

It was on May 23 that he made his motion that His Majesty be solicited to end the proscription against the Protestants. The Count d'Artois objected that the subject was not on the agenda, but he promised to speak to the King about it, and the Marquis read his statement, prepared after consultations with Malesherbes, the Duke de La Rochefoucauld and the Baron de Breteuil, Minister of the Interior. When he had done, La Luzerne, Bishop of Langres and brother of the Minister at Philadelphia, rose.

"I second the motion of Monsieur de La Fayette," he said, "from motives other than his. He has spoken as a philosopher; I shall speak as a bishop." And he went on to say that he preferred Protestant "temples" to clandestine gatherings, and ministers to itinerant preachers. The motion was carried.

La Fayette had sent word to Nîmes for Rabaut Saint-Etienne, the eldest son of old Paul Rabaut, the "pastor in the desert," to come to Paris, and the young minister of the Protestant faith was even then a guest in the house in the rue de Bourbon, coddled by those two most devout of Roman Catholics, the Marquise de La Fayette and the Duchess d'Ayen.

The Marquis was happy to present him to the Baron de Breteuil—the first time that a Protestant ecclesiastic had

been received at Versailles since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

He came out of the Assembly of Notables the most popular man in France, but he had drawn down upon his head a hatred that was never to be appeased. Indeed, he took few pains to appease it, and wherever he went he displayed with a pride that was not without its alloy of youthful vanity those liberal principles that had been so much in fashion until he tried to put them into practice. One evening, at the house of the Duke d'Harcourt, governor of the Dauphin, the company were discussing the books of history that could be put into the hands of the young prince.

"I think," observed La Fayette, "that he would do well to begin his history of France with the year 1787."

And Brienne remarked in the Council of Ministers:

"He is the most dangerous man of them all; his logic consists wholly in action."

II

The provincial assemblies suggested by the Notables were created by royal edict, and La Fayette was named as one of the representatives of the nobility for Auvergne. In August he went to Clermont-Ferrand to attend a preliminary session. His journey was like a princely progress. He made a triumphal entry in Aurillac. "It was the first hero we had ever seen," a local chronicler naïvely recorded, "and we could never grow tired of looking at him." That evening the streets were illuminated and La Fayette, seated in a barouche beside the Marquis de Fontanges, drove to a grand ball given in his honour, but "the ladies were mortified to see him chatting with his friend the Viscount de Peyronnenc instead of dancing." The next day was Sunday, and,

as a good politician, he went to mass and sat in a large armchair, placed by the *curé* in the chancel as though for royalty itself. Mounted escorts conducted him as far as Vic, and at Saint-Flour he was solemnly received by the Masonic Lodge Sully, and at a banquet verses were read celebrating "the illustrious La Fayette," who, "by his noble exploits in two hemispheres, had made all men his brothers."

The government had just issued decrees augmenting taxes, and at the plenary session of the Provincial Assembly, he drew up a stout protest, which the Assembly adopted. The King sent back a sharp rebuke, and it was the ironic pen of the Marquis that wrote the reply, which declared that the Assembly "had learned with a profound consternation the unexpected marks of the dissatisfaction of the King," and that there would remain to it, "in its lively sorrow, no consolation, if each one of its members . . . had not followed solely the voice of his conscience." In consequence, the Assembly "at the feet of a beloved King, renewed with confidence its first proposition"—that is, it would not consent to the tax.

There were similar revolts in Dauphiny and Brittany. The protest of Brittany was signed by three hundred noblemen, and twelve of their number came to Versailles to present it to the King. La Fayette met them and publicly approved their action, and when they presented their protest, they were promptly sent to the Bastille. The Queen sent word to La Fayette that she was displeased and astonished; why, she should like to know, must he, who was not of Brittany, join the nobles of that province in their rebellion? He replied that he belonged to the Province of Brittany in the same manner that she belonged to the House of Austria. She struck back promptly and got the King to strip him of his rank of *maréchal de camp*.

With these rebellions in the provinces and the revolt of the *parlements* the whole nation was growing restless; a war of pamphlets began; the streets of Paris were filled with brutal attacks on Marie Antoinette, whom the people, weary of the influence of Vienna, now called in derision *l'Autrichienne*. The vilest slanders and libels were circulated. When she drove to the theatre with Madame de Polignac, she was hissed; she dared no longer appear in Paris. Some of the attacks were inspired by Madame de La Motte, whose branded shoulder was still smarting; others by the Duke de Chartres, who had succeeded to his father's title and become the Duke d'Orléans. The Duke hated the Queen; she had indignantly repulsed his libertine advances and he was in disgrace at Court. Then, when he flouted the King in a Royal Séance, the King exiled him for a time to his country place at Villers-Cotterets. The Duke, perhaps not without reason, held the Queen responsible for this action, which interfered so seriously with his amusements—ogling women in the Champs Elysées, galloping in English hunting costume beside the carriages of *demi-mondaines* at Longchamps, and luring young girls to Monceau—and in that moment his conspiracy against the throne began. The roués at the Palais Royal, companions of his debaucheries, took up his quarrel with the Court, and the royal rake joined forces with the radical revolutionaries and used his immense fortune to make himself the idol of the rabble with whom his flamboyant dissipations had already made him popular.

Mobs surrounded the *Parlement,* hurrahed for the members and egged them on to resist the King. When the members appeared, the mob took the horses out of the carriages of the favourites and drew them home. The Count d'Artois, sent to hold a *lit de justice* in the Cour des

Aides, was hooted in the streets. The Archbishop of Toulouse was dismissed, and the mob burnt him in effigy. The Guards charged. Necker was recalled to the Finances—too late. Louis XVI, at his poor wit's end, tried to forget his troubles in hunting half the day, and in drinking and eating the other half.

"The King," wrote Jefferson to John Adams, "long in the habit of drowning his cares in wine, plunges deeper and deeper. The Queen cries, but sins on."

Marie Antoinette, the Count d'Artois, the Polignacs and their dissolute friends, laid the blame for it all on the "gold of Pitt" and the revolutionary La Fayette. He did not go to Court often now.

The shadows of private sorrows were stealing on the house of Noailles. Clotilde, Madame de Thésan, died in childbed, and the Duchess d'Ayen was plunged into grief. She bore it stoically, sustained by the sympathetic attentions of her children, especially La Fayette. He was always her favourite. Already she saw the storm that was coming, saw it perhaps more clearly than he, though he realized that the convocation of the States General was now inevitable, and with his inveterate optimism, looked forward to it confidently as the solution of all their troubles.

"For my part," he wrote to Washington, "I am satisfied to think that before long I shall be in an assembly of representatives of the French nation, or at Mt. Vernon."

III

Two years before he had shocked the Court by demanding the convocation of the States General at the end of five years, that is, in 1792. Now, when time had advanced no farther than September, 1788, things had come to such a

pass that the King convoked them for May 4, 1789, and the Assembly of Notables was again convened to deliberate on the method of representation. La Fayette proposed that the Third Estate have double representation so that they might equal in numbers the other two orders, the clergy and the nobility. But the Notables were far behind public opinion; the only reform that interested them was how to avoid paying taxes themselves, and they promptly voted down the proposal.

During the autumn and the winter that followed, that terrible winter in which there was so much suffering among the poor, La Fayette and some of his more liberal friends, La Rochefoucauld, Luynes, d'Aiguillon, Talleyrand and Condorcet, held frequent private meetings at the house of Adrien Duport to discuss programmes, and it was there that for the first time he met the Count de Mirabeau. He disliked him from the first. Mirabeau's mere physical appearance was repulsive—a huge giant of a man, with shifty eyes, an enormous head, a mass of thick hair, curled and powdered, and a large, fleshy face hideously scarred by pockmarks. He wore a coat with enormous buttons of coloured stones; the buckles of his shoes were enormous, everything about him was enormous—enormous voice, enormous passions, enormous appetities, enormous talents and enormous humbuggery. When he tried to be polite, his manner became exaggerated and overdone; his first words were fulsome and vulgar compliments; La Fayette could see that he lacked the ease given by the habit of high society. He had led a life of open and shameless debauchery, had been involved in a scandalous divorce suit, accused of rape, and every other crime, was always hard up and cadged money from every one he knew. Having failed of employment in the royal interest—Marie Antoinette held him in abhorrence

—he had espoused the popular side, and La Fayette suspected that he was in the pay of the Duke d'Orléans. They were discussing that evening the question whether they and other nobles of the popular party should seek election to the States General at the hands of their own order, or at those of the Third Estate. La Fayette thought that they should present themselves to the Third Estate, whose ideas they shared. Then Mirabeau got up and spoke against him. As he listened to the melodious voice, the facile eloquence, La Fayette was fascinated; the others were all convinced, and he was almost convinced himself. Mirabeau duly presented himself as a candidate to the Nobles of La Provence, and when they would have none of him, he turned, of course, to the Third Estate and was elected.

La Fayette, accompanied by his brother-in-law, the Marquis de Montagu, and by La Colombe, went to Chavaniac late in February, to present himself as a candidate to the nobility of his own province of Auvergne, assembled at Riom. The Polignac faction, and the agents of the Queen and Court were already on the ground, plotting against him. A fortnight of feverish canvassing followed, and the members of the Third Estate, fearing that he would be defeated, urged him to accept election at their hands, but he declined. His friends among the Nobles assured him that, if he would make certain concessions, their order would elect him unanimously. But he refused to make any concessions, and when on March 4 the deputies of the three orders met in the great hall of the palace, he had a bitter contest and almost failed of election, winning by the narrow margin of three votes—198 to 195. He had triumphed, but the Nobles at once placed him in an embarrassing position by adopting *cahiers,* instructing their delegates not to vote with

the Third Estate until authorized to do so by a majority of their own number.

It was hard to swallow and he was tempted to resign and to offer himself to the Third Estate, which would gladly have given him a seat. But the Count Cæsar de la Tour-Maubourg, his friend from boyhood, and others advised against this course, and even if they had not done so, the Marquis's pride would have deterred him; "the infamous persecution that I suffered from Paris," he wrote to La Tour-Maubourg, "and the cabals that surrounded me made it a kind of duty to triumph over them. Besides, the people will have friends enough in their own House."

La Tour-Maubourg was encountering similar opposition at Le Puy, and La Fayette sent La Colombe to help him in his canvass, authorizing the Chevalier to buy the fief of one of Maubourg's opponents, if necessary, and vote it as his proxy. He paid visits to his electors at Brioude, at Clermont and at Riom and then hastened back to Paris.

IV

The Noailles, like all the other great families at Court, left Paris in the spring of 1789, and went into residence at Versailles. The old mansions were opened, and the royal town roused out of its formal reserve to receive the States General. But in spite of the vague air of melancholy and decay that the town always wore, it was better than Paris. The Duchess had had a severe illness, and was glad to get away from the noisy city. And it was convenient for La Fayette and Noailles, both of whom were members of the chamber of nobles, and spent much of their time in the *salon* of their aunt, the Countess de Tessé, who had opened her house at Versailles.

Of all that group of women who were enthusiastic worshippers of La Fayette—his cousin the Princess de Poix, the Princess d'Hénin, the Marquise de Coigny and, of course, the Countess de Simiane—the most interesting and the most original was the Countess de Tessé. She was a little woman, with piercing dark eyes, her face showing the marks of small-pox, her small mouth, as she talked, constantly twitching into a queer grimace with a nervous *tic;* and yet she had a grace and nobility of manner, a rare charm and a wit that made her irresistible. La Fayette was her hero in politics, just as Voltaire, whom she had known well, had been her master in philosophy. She was of a delightful inconsistency; an atheist who ridiculed all pious practices, she always made the sign of the cross whenever she took medicine; she detested priests, and helped all the poor clerics in Paris; she had no faith in mankind, and believed in democracy. Thomas Jefferson was her intimate friend. Her *salon* was the centre of advanced thought, and La Fayette reigned there.

They were all filled with a gay confidence in the future, and yet already in that month of April, strange and sinister figures had appeared in the streets of Paris; bands of hairy men, ragged and dishevelled, armed with ugly clubs, swarming down from the Butte Montmartre. Madame Vigée Lebrun reported that they looked like brigands—"so terrifying were their faces." They spoke with the rolling accent of the Midi; and must have come from Marseilles, that breeding place of turbulence. On April 27 they trooped through the faubourg Saint-Antoine to the house of a respectable manufacturer of wall-paper, a man of liberal views, named Révaillon, in the rue de Montreuil, who had been chosen delegate for the Third Estate in opposition to the candidate of the Duke d'Orléans, and accused him

of having declared that a working-man could live on fifteen *sous* a day. The Duke d'Orléans, happening at that moment to drive by on his way to the races at Vincennes, where one of his horses was to run against a horse of the Count d'Artois, stopped his carriage and in his patronizing, flamboyant way spoke to the rioters—*"Allons, mes enfants!"* —and drove on. The mob cheered, cried *"Vive le Duc d'Orléans!"* and proceeded to rifle Révaillon's house and shop. Troops arrived; the rioters threw tiles from the housetops, the troops fired; then, fighting in the streets, and two hundred were killed before order was restored. Talleyrand said that the riot had been organized by the Duke, and La Fayette thought it very likely.

However, all that would soon be arranged, and when the King's heralds at arms, in their coats of purple velvet with gold *fleurs de lys,* mounted on white horses and preceded by trumpeters from the royal mews rode through the town and published the proclamation convoking the States General, everybody heaved a sigh of relief.

At last the day came, May 4. Versailles was filled with crowds come from Paris; whole families, unable to find lodgings or shelter, had lain out all night in the rain. But at dawn the skies had cleared and now the sun was shining.

La Fayette, in a coat of cloth of gold and a gold-embroidered mantle, lace at his throat, sword at his side and on his head a large hat with white plumes in the style of Henry IV, joined the other nobles at the church of Notre Dame, whence they were to go in a body on foot and attend mass at the church of Saint Louis. The King, with Monsieur and the Count d'Artois, and the young dukes of Angoulême, Berry and Bourbon, came in the gilded state coaches, escorted by a cavalcade of pages, squires and falconers, hawk on wrist. The Queen's coach came after, followed by all

the carriages of the Court. They all alighted, and M. de Dreux-Brézé, full of business that morning, formed the procession, distributed lighted candles, and the pageant moved on its slow, stately way, a brilliant stream of colour —white cottas, red cassocks, gold chasubles, silk banners and glittering uniforms—flowing between the lines of French Guards and Swiss Guards, through streets hung in tapestries from the palace, the tiny flames of the candles glimmering palely in the sunlight. But the gorgeous column was cut in two by the sombre mass of the Third Estate, its representatives all in black coats and three-cornered hats, save a stout peasant from Brittany, who stubbornly wore his native costume in spite of the Count's commands. Mirabeau was there, carrying his lighted candle, walking in his large buckled shoes. And that black mass, anonymous and democratic, symbolic of the New Time, was the only section of that procession to receive applause. La Fayette walked among the nobles unseen, or if seen, then unacclaimed, and sick at heart. There was, alas, no applause for him, nor for a single one of the nobles, but the Duke d'Orléans, who had refused to take his place with the royal family and walked among the Nobility was hailed as the friend of the people, and far more as the enemy of *l'Autrichienne*. After them came the Clergy and the Archbishop of Paris, in his stiff embroidered cope, carrying the Holy Sacrament, and then the King, on foot, bearing his lighted candle like the rest. But not a sound, not one single *vivat* for him. The Queen walked a little way behind him, to the left, at the head of the princesses and ladies of the Court, and when they passed the *Petite Ecurie* she raised her sad eyes to the balcony where on cushions lay her little son, Louis, Dauphin of France, sick unto death. The Queen's eyes sought him and smiled; he smiled

wanly in recognition, and she walked on with the air of sadness that she was beginning now to wear. There had been no applause for her; the hostility was electric in the air, and suddenly, at her very side, a group of women from Paris screamed in her face:

"Vive le Duc d'Orléans!"

The Queen turned pale, faltered an instant, then recovered her self-possession and walked on.

The next day the States General met in the great hall that had been erected for the Notables in the court of the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs. On a gold and purple throne Louis XVI, the Regent blazing on his plumed hat, was seated under an immense baldaquin of purple velvet sown with gold *fleurs de lys;* at his left, two steps below, the Queen, in purple and white with silver sequins, a heron's plume in her hair and a bandeau of diamonds about her head, the princes and officers of the crown and the great ladies of the Court around her. At the foot of the throne sat the Keeper of the Seals, lower down the ministers and secretaries of state at a long table covered with purple velvet. Among the ministers in their robes of state, M. Necker appeared in the ostentatious simplicity of common clothes. On the right sat the Clergy; on the left the Nobility; at the bottom of the hall the Third Estate. The galleries and the tribunes were filled with spectators. Thomas Jefferson was among them, tall, thin, in black; Gouverneur Morris was there too, touched because the Queen wept, and indignant because not a voice was raised to acclaim her.

The King, his hat worn gracelessly, rose, stood a moment in silence, embarrassed and ill at ease. He had forgotten the manuscript of his speech, and they waited while it was sent for. At last he read it, full of paternal phrases. The Keeper of the Seals made a mediocre address; Necker spoke

about finances, whilst the crowd, bored by all the dull statistics, grew restless and impatient. Still, Thomas Jefferson thought, that, "as opera," the scene was imposing.

V

Jefferson was concerned for his friend the Marquis. "I begin to be worried about you," he wrote him the next day. "Your principles are decidedly with the *Tiers Etat,* but your instructions are against it." The Marquis found himself, in fact, in an awkward position. The logical and titular leader of the advanced party, the representative of the "American School" and exponent of the new era, he was condemned to silence; when, in his own order, he ventured to express his liberal opinions, his colleagues reminded him of those unfortunate *cahiers.*

The main question, at that stage, was whether the Clergy and the Nobility should meet with the Third Estate; the majority of the nobles voted against it, and under his instructions La Fayette was forced to vote with them, or not to vote at all. Sometimes, in disgust, he would get up and fling out of the meeting of the nobles. "I smother in our chamber," he said; "the mephitic odours of their prejudices are not good for my lungs."

The King, persuaded by the Queen and his brothers, retired to Marly to avoid the storm, and when, on the morning of the 20th, the members repaired to the Hall, they found the doors closed and guarded, and a royal proclamation posted up, ordering a suspension of meetings until the 22nd, when a royal session of the three orders would be held. The Commons, as the Third Estate was beginning to call itself, after the English fashion, joined by some of the provincial *curés,* assembled in the Tennis Court hard

by, and swore an oath not to separate until they had given a constitution to France. Two days later the royal session was held; the King read a long address, commanded the three orders to meet separately, and on his going out to follow him. He finished, turned his back, and walked out. The Nobility followed and most of the Clergy, but the Commons, joined by the country *curés,* refused to budge, and sat on. M. de Dreux-Brézé came back, and, in the King's name, ordered them out. Then Mirabeau roared:

"Go tell the King that we are here by the will of the people and that we can be put out only by the force of bayonets!"

In the streets outside some children piped feebly *"Vive le Roi!"* But the people remained silent—until the Duke d'Orléans appeared, and then they cheered wildly; they cheered Necker, too, as "the saviour of oppressed France," but there were no cheers for La Fayette, walking with the other nobles, and bound hand and foot by that imperative mandate. Sick with chagrin, and almost in despair, he was tempted to go to Riom, lay his resignation before the bailiwick and present himself as a candidate to the Third Estate; he would have no difficulty in finding some delegate who would resign and give him his seat. "I can not bring myself to be merely the man of the Senechal's court of Auvergne, after having contributed to the liberty of another world."

He was not only condemned to a humiliating silence and immobility, but he must be lectured by Gouverneur Morris. Gouverneur Morris had come to Paris in a private capacity, attracted, as the French modestly explained, "by the refinements of a superior civilization," but also to promote some vulgar commercial affairs, such as selling tobacco to the government. The Marquis had known him in America

and felt that as an American, he ought to like him, but he did not find him *sympathique;* Morris was pompous, patronizing and snobbish, and far more royalist than the King. However, La Fayette gave a dinner in his honour, and afterwards little Anastasie sang, quite charmingly and in English, a song that Morris had written. Morris was cutting a figure in society, and dining out every day; he had got it into his head, with no great difficulty, that all the ladies were in love with him; he cultivated people with titles; was strongly opposed to republicanism; proclaimed his ideas everywhere and was bursting with advice. One day at a dinner given by the Countess de Tessé, when Morris began to admonish him, La Fayette told him that his reactionary views, repeated everywhere with avidity in the *salons* of Paris and Versailles, as coming from an American, were doing the cause of liberalism in France great harm. Morris replied that he was opposed to democracy, because he loved liberty, and that the worst thing that could happen would be the triumph of the Marquis's party.

Nevertheless his party triumphed. Those stubborn *bourgeois* held out for a week, and then the King, seeing that he had lost, wrote letters with his own hand to the presidents of the Clergy and the Nobles engaging them to meet with the Commons, and the States General became that "something better" with which the Marquis had shocked the Count d'Artois two years before—the National Assembly. He was free to speak now, if not to vote, as he pleased —for his imperative mandate still held—though he was not free from the lessons of Gouverneur Morris. When he and the Marquise went to the Fourth of July dinner given by Thomas Jefferson at the Legation in Paris, they found Morris there, and the lecture was resumed. He was almost afraid to go out to dine.

The Assembly had settled down to its work of preparing a constitution, but the Court party, furious at its defeat, had other cards up its sleeve; there were strange movements of troops at Versailles, strange, that is, until the Assembly realized that the Salle des Menus Plaisirs was virtually surrounded. Then the regiments of the Royal Allemand and the Swiss Guards were marched into Paris, and sent into camp at Grenelle and at the Champ de Mars, and it was rumoured that there was a plot to abduct members of the States General, that the Menus Plaisirs had been mined by the Court party and would be blown up with all the Assembly. Mirabeau began to thunder and demanded the withdrawal of the troops. Then, for the first time during the two months that the Assembly had been in session, La Fayette spoke, seconding the motion and calling for its immediate discussion.

He was not an orator, as Mirabeau was; his elegant and often ironic speech was apt to be cold and disdainful and delivered in a rather lordly manner.

A few days later, on July 11, he spoke again and laid before the Assembly his Declaration of the Rights of Man, and in doing so he said:

"While my instructions still deprive me of the power of voting among you, I believe it nevertheless to be my duty to offer you the tribute of my thoughts."

He was proud to be the author of the first declaration of the kind to be offered in Europe, proud to point out that this declaration was not a petition to the throne, suing for concessions, but an assertion of popular rights in conformity with "the principles of the American era." He called it "the decalogue of the free man." He had discussed it with his friends the physiocrats and with Jefferson, with whose views it so well accorded, and Morris, of course, had offered

his advice, suggesting amendments, "to soften the somewhat too strong language of liberty." It was, perhaps, somewhat metapolitical, but, printed and profusely circulated, it became the basis of the declaration that was finally adopted.

He could feel that he was taking his place now in the great movement, and this feeling was confirmed when the Duke d'Orléans began to make advances to him. Many of the young men who had been in America, like Lauzun, had joined the Orléans party, and one day an agent of the Duke came to tell him that his head and that of the Duke had been proscribed; the Court had these sinister projects against him because he was the only man capable of commanding an army, and he and the Duke d'Orléans should unite their forces at once. But La Fayette replied coldly:

"Monseigneur the Duke d'Orléans is nothing more in my eyes than a private person richer than I, whose fate is no more interesting than that of the other members of the minority; it is useless to form a party when one is with the whole nation; we must work for the good without troubling ourselves about the consequences and build the edifice or leave the materials after us."

The King had refused to withdraw the troops; they were posted, twenty or thirty thousand of them, under the old Marshal de Broglie, between Versailles and Paris; all the bridges and roads were guarded. Then, that afternoon, a *coup de théâtre:* Necker was dismissed. The Assembly was in dismay.

Not that Necker mattered; the Marquis had little respect for him; two days before he had said that there were few worn-out machines that could run for a shorter time than Necker; Mirabeau called him "the clock that always loses" and the "Genevese penny-snatcher," but the people consid-

ered him their saviour, and when the news of his dismissal got abroad they thought that the end of the world had come. And Mirabeau began to thunder once more; "the exile of Necker will plunge the country into an abyss of misfortune."

The next day Paris was in an uproar. It was Sunday; the heat was terrific. The brigands swarmed through the baked streets; sweltering crowds gathered at the Palais Royal, the headquarters of the Orléanists; wild rumours flew about—the Duke had been sent to the Bastille—assassinated, they knew not what. Then the mob; busts of Orléans and of Necker taken from the waxworks of Curtius in the Boulevard du Temple were crowned and carried through the streets. Agitators were shouting on every street corner, among them a young lawyer with the gift of the gab named Danton, who had lately joined the Orléans faction. That afternoon, young Camille Desmoulins, rushing out of the Café de Foy at the Palais Royal, sprang on a table in the garden, plucked a green leaf from a chestnut-tree over his head, brandished a pistol and with horrible grimaces to control his stutter, shouted: "To arms!"

There were skirmishes between the mob and the Royal Allemand; at the Tuileries a regiment raked the crowd with its fire, and the people assembled in the Place Louis XV, after waiting politely for Thomas Jefferson to drive past in his carriage, pelted the Swiss Guards with stones.

The National Assembly expressed its regret at the dismissal of Necker, and in view of the gravity of the situation voted to remain in permanent session. But the heat was prostrating; the President of the Assembly, Le France de Pompignan, Archbishop of Vienne, was old; and to relieve him it was decided to elect a vice-president. They chose La Fayette, and as he mounted the dais of the Presi-

dent, the whole Assembly acclaimed him. He felt that events had freed him at last and he was happy.

"Messieurs," he said as he took the chair, "in any other moment I should have reminded you of my insufficiency for this post, and of the peculiar situation in which I find myself; but the circumstances are such that my first impulse is to accept with transport the honour you do me, and zealously to discharge its functions under our respectable President, just as my first duty is never to dissociate myself from your efforts to maintain and consolidate the public peace."

That night he stretched himself on a bench in the hall of the Menus Plaisirs, and tried to sleep. The next day, July 14, the Assembly wrangled over his Declaration of the Rights of Man. All day long, in that hot, crowded room, the representatives of the nation, determined to establish an orderly and constitutional government, shouted at one another, interrupted speakers or howled them down. Their nerves were on edge; the heat was stifling; there was no communication with Paris, and there were dark apprehensions, a sense of fear and horror in the air; whenever a fiacre rattled down the wide avenue of Versailles, men started and cast involuntary glances towards Paris. The long day wore away; the Assembly sat on, the candles were lighted. Night came—and Noailles, just back from Paris, a little shaken, not quite so debonair as usual, with news of the fall of the Bastille. The mob had besieged the prison, and by some miracle of intrepidity had carried the ancient fortress by assault; Lannay, Governor of the prison, had been dragged to the Hôtel de Ville and hanged from a street lamp; Flesselles, *prévôt des marchands* of Paris, had been massacred.

The Assembly was in consternation. They voted to send

a deputation at once to the Château to implore the King to withdraw the troops. The President, the Archbishop of Vienne, went at the head of the deputation, and La Fayette took the chair.

"Messieurs," he said, "it is due to the dignity, as it is the duty of the Assembly, not to interrupt its labours, but to continue them with the calmness of that courage which circumstances must not be allowed to alter."

At midnight, two citizens of Paris, Bancal and Ganilh, sent by the electors, worn out with excitement and fatigue, their eyes full of horror, appeared and gave an account of the tragic day through which Paris had passed. The Assembly sat on in stunned insensibility; some members left, some fell asleep and snored; the candles guttered. La Fayette stretched himself again on his bench.

The next morning the Assembly voted an address to the throne and appointed eighty of its members, La Fayette at their head, to carry it to the King. They were about to go forth when, to everybody's amazement, the Duke de Liancourt, Grand Master of the Wardrobe, appeared and announced that the King was coming himself.

Liancourt was a cousin of La Fayette, and drew him aside to tell him of an interesting little incident. Liancourt had done what no one else at the palace had dared to do; at the *coucher du roi,* the night before, he had told the bewildered King the truth. The King had said:

"Then it is a great riot?"

"No, Sire, it is a great revolution," Liancourt had replied.

La Fayette and the deputies went out into the court. And sure enough, there he was, Louis XVI, come on foot, without escort, accompanied only by his brothers, Monsieur and the Count d'Artois. La Fayette conducted him into the great hall, and there, in a silence strange to a French assem-

bly, the King stood before them, with little that was royal in his port, but on his large face, usually so expressionless, a pained and bewildered concern. There was something pathetic in the spectacle; the hearts of the deputies went out to him in an impulse of sympathy. He began to speak, with transparent sincerity and a touching confidence. "The head of the nation comes with confidence into the midst of its representatives, to tell them of his grief, to ask them to find means of restoring peace and order. . . . I know that they have aroused unjust suspicions in your minds; I know that they have dared to say that your persons are not in safety. Is it necessary to reassure you concerning such criminal rumours, refuted in advance by your knowledge of my character? Well, then, it is I, who am one with my nation, it is I who trust in you! Help me in these circumstances to assure the salvation of the State! I expect this from the National Assembly, from the zeal of the representatives of my people."

The delegates listened in an emotional silence, and had not failed to note the significant use of the words "National Assembly," pronounced by the King for the first time. And now when he concluded his simple speech by saying that he had ordered the troops to withdraw from Paris, they gave him an ovation. The enthusiasm spread to the crowd outside; the load of fear was lifted; the cries of *"Vive le Roi!"* were caught up in the street. The deputies poured out of the hall to escort the King to the Château, but when he appeared the cheering crowd surrounded him and escorted him in their own fashion. It was scarcely half a mile from the Salle des Menus Plaisirs to the Château, but in its delirious joy the crowd so swarmed upon him that it took him an hour and a half to cover that short distance. The fiery July sun beat down on his head, the crowd bawled

its *vivats* in his ears, and with hot breath puffed its felicitations in his face; men pawed him with dirty hands and slatternly women of the people insisted on hugging him and kissing his large cheeks; and, powerless, he made his slow way along in that fawning mob, smothered by the sweaty caresses of his fickle subjects, hustled through that wide, dusty avenue as he was hustled through life, uncomfortable and reluctant, but complaisant and unresisting, by forces that he never could control. And so, more dead than alive, he reached the marble staircase where the Queen was waiting on the balcony with the Dauphin and Madame Royale. He joined them and mopping his face and neck, beamed his benedictions on the people with whom he was reconciled.

The Assembly named another deputation—eighty-eight members this time—with La Fayette at its head, to carry the good news to Paris. The long file of carriages drove as fast as the horses could go. At the gate of the Tuileries they were met by four members of the assembly of electors; one of the four, of course, must make a speech, and they stopped, whilst Duveyrier welcomed them, comparing them to angels from heaven come as messengers of peace. Then, escorted by a detachment of the Guards and the Swiss they drove on to the Hôtel de Ville, between two hedges of citizens, students, shopkeepers' assistants, clerks, armed with strange weapons of all sorts, flint-locks, pikes, scythes, pruning-hooks, the newly raised volunteer militia of Paris, whilst the crowd flung flowers into the carriages and cried *"Vive le Roi! Vive la Nation!"* At the bottom of the Cours-la-Reine the deputies alighted from their carriages and went on foot to the Place de Grève where a dense crowd packed before the Hôtel de Ville welcomed them with a roar of relief and gratitude.

Somehow they wormed through the crowd, and up the grand stairway to the hall of the Hôtel de Ville. La Fayette, Bailly, Monseigneur de Juigne, the venerable Archbishop of Paris—whose carriage the people had stoned two days before, after he had given all he had to buy bread for them—the Abbé Siéyès, the Count de Clermont-Tonnerre and Lally-Tollendal, took their seats on the dais at the end of the room, and the trumpeters blew for silence. La Fayette spoke, felicitating the electors and citizens of Paris on "the liberty they had conquered by their courage," and then read the speech that the King had made to the National Assembly, interrupted at every period by cries of *"Vive le Roi!"* When he had done, the cheering broke out more loudly than ever, and he felt a certain stimulating quality in the atmosphere that strung up his nerves anew after all the fatigue of those white nights at Versailles. And suddenly he realized that they were acclaiming him as commanding general of the Paris militia.

An hour before, in that hall, the autogenous assembly of electors, like some vast vigilance committee, "with no other right than their patriotism" had been discussing the choice of a commander for the militia. A certain M. de La Barthe had been proposed and seemed about to be elected when the sympathies of the crowd had suddenly veered, and with cries of "Kill him!" they had chased the unfortunate candidate back into private life. And then Moreau de Saint-Méry, president of the electors, had made one of those dramatic gestures that are irresistible to the French; solemnly, he raised his hand and pointed to Houdon's bust of La Fayette, lifting its white serenity over the black heads of the crowd. That gesture decided them; they acclaimed the white impassive bust, and now they acclaimed La Fayette, standing there, a little pale himself, before all this adula-

tion. He waited an impressive moment, and then whipping out his light sword he swore "to sacrifice his life, if needs be, in preserving that precious liberty, the defence of which they had deigned to confide to him."

Then the crowd began to acclaim Jean Sylvain Bailly, a *littérateur* and astronomer of distinction, fifty-three years old, who had presided over the Commons in the Tennis Court, as *prévôt des marchands,* to succeed Flesselles, murdered by the mob the day before.

But a voice rose above the tumult, "Not *prévôt des marchands*" which, until this moment had been the title of the chief magistrate of the city, "Not *prévôt des marchands*" this voice of the new age shouted, "but Mayor of Paris!"

"Yes, Mayor of Paris!" cried the crowd.

M. Bailly, overcome with emotion, bowed his head in his hands on the table before him, and La Fayette heard him say, as though speaking to himself,

"I am not worthy of so great an honour, nor capable of bearing such a burden."

And the thousands massed in the Place de Grève raised a great cheer of *"Vive La Fayette!"* took the horses out of his carriage and drew him away in triumph to Notre Dame where the Archbishop of Paris sang a *Te Deum.*

VI

He passed another white night and in the morning the rioting began again; before nine o'clock a mob was dragging a priest, the Abbé Cordier de Saint-Firmin, to a street lamp in the Place de Grève. He went out on the perron of the Hôtel de Ville alone, and just at that moment saw his old tutor M. Frestel, leading George through the crowd. George ran up the steps of the perron, and La Fayette took

him by the hand, turned towards the crowd and said, with a certain accentuation of his calm manner:

"Messieurs, I have the honour to present to you my son."

The mob gaped a moment in surprise, then broke into cheers, and, taking advantage of this diversion, some friends smuggled the shaken Abbé away. Time and again that day he went out on the Place de Grève and snatched some victim from the mob, and between whiles proposed that the militia be called the National Guard of Paris, which idea was adopted; he wrote to the National Assembly announcing his election and asking its orders, "a mark of deference that produced the best effect," and directed that the Bastille be razed and sent the trumpeters of the city to proclaim the order. Though he had no force at hand save that horde of *bourgeois* volunteers, unarmed and undisciplined, he had, in some mysterious way, suddenly acquired an occult mastery of the crowd; forty thousand hysterical people would assemble in the Place de Grève, clamouring for they knew not what, and when he appeared, at sight of him, at a wave of his hand, they would disperse.

But [as he wrote to Madame de Simiane that night], this furious, drunken people will not listen to me always. At this moment, while I write, eighty thousand persons surround the Hôtel de Ville and say that they are being deceived, that the troops are not withdrawing, that the King must come. They will no longer recognize anything that I do not sign. When I am not there, their heads turn. . . . I reign in Paris, and over a people in fury, pushed by abominable cabals; on the other hand, a thousand infamies have been heaped upon them of which they have reason to complain. In this very moment they are raising terrible cries. If I appear, they will calm down; but others will come. Adieu.

They would come because the whole population was maddened by a dark, primeval fear—the fear of starvation.

Wild rumours were flying; the wine of the workmen who were demolishing the Bastille had been poisoned; the Court, in order to starve the people, was preventing wheat from entering the city; soon there would be no bread. Then, mysteriously, no one knew how or why, a demand arose for the King to come to Paris; the irrepressible fishwives began to march again, shrill voices of the people's will.

The King in fact had already resolved to come to Paris, and when the risky project was announced to La Fayette for the very next day, he took every precaution to assure his safety. He forbade vehicles to circulate, placed along the line of march double ranks of the National Guard. They were without uniforms and they were armed with disparate weapons; but there were two hundred thousand of them—militia raised in every one of the sixty districts of Paris, revolted soldiers who had joined the insurrection, even monks in sandals and brown robes. Each man wore a cockade of blue and red, the colours of the city of Paris. Mounted on a white horse, followed by his staff and escort, he rode through those crowded streets to meet the King. It was one of the great moments of his life. He had dreamt of glory, but never anything quite so amazing as this—two hundred thousand men to command, and the King at his feet!

He rode to the Point-du-Jour and waited. The King, on leaving Versailles, had asked the *cortège* to move slowly, not to tire the great throng that followed on foot, and it was not until four o'clock in the afternoon that he appeared, in his coach, escorted by the militia of Versailles, a savage horde, accompanied by dishevelled women, waving branches and beribboned wreaths, and the deputies of the National Assembly following after in confused order.

The King, pale and anxious, sat in his carriage peering

out at the crowd. La Fayette rode up, presented his humble duties, and reassured His Majesty. The procession moved on, crossed the Place Louis XV and turned into the rue Saint-Honoré, a narrow lane formed by two bristling ranks of National Guards; behind them, crushed against the grey walls of the curving street, masses of men and women and children; from every window hung clusters of curious people, on the roofs, perched among the chimney-pots, other masses looked down. The crowd received the King in a chilling silence; not a cheer, not a cry, no sound save that of hisses, as the Archbishop of Paris drove sadly by with downcast eyes.

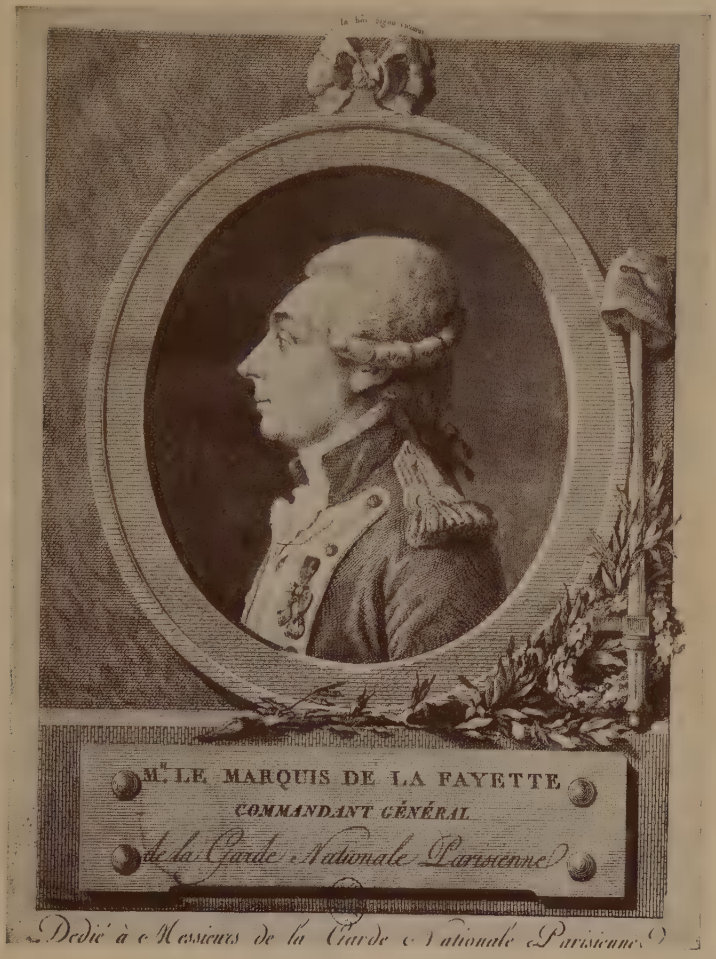
As the procession debouched into the Place de Grève, Mayor Bailly came down the steps of the Hôtel de Ville and presented to the King an enormous cockade of blue and red ribbons, and the stunned and complaisant monarch hastily stuck it in his hat. It looked rather ridiculous, but, at the gesture, the crowd, for the first time during all that slow, humiliating progress, bellowed: *"Vive le Roi!"*

The King alighted from his carriage, and under an archway of pikes went up the perron and disappeared in the Hôtel de Ville, while La Fayette, having conducted him in safety to the end of his journey, wheeled his horse and effacing himself remained in the Place outside—foregoing the speeches that were made within, where the new Mayor presented to the King the keys of the city.

When the King came out at last, and La Fayette dismounted and went forward to escort him to his carriage, the King said:

"Monsieur de La Fayette, I was looking for you to inform you that I confirm your nomination to the post of commanding general of the Parisian Guard."

La Fayette bowed. He felt a sudden pity, an affectionate


M.r LE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE
COMMANDANT GÉNÉRAL
de la Garde Nationale Parisienne
Dedié à Messieurs de la Garde Nationale Parisienne

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

From a Contemporary Print in the Bibliothéque Nationale.

impulse to protect this weak King whose confirmations he could contemn.

But this calm did not last long. Armed men were pouring into the city; thousands of soldiers who had deserted the royal standard were roistering in the streets; provisions were running short; there was no government other than that which the assembly of electors had taken into their own hands, for the functionaries of the old order only increased the difficulty. The agents of the Duke d'Orléans, swarming out from the Palais Royal, were fomenting trouble, and by July 22 the mad and drunken mob was raging through the streets again. La Fayette arrived at the Hôtel de Ville that morning to find them howling obscene invectives at an old man who stood cowering against a table, his face covered with blood and mud. It was M. Foullon, seventy-four years of age, an ex-minister and intendant in the army during the Seven Years' War, who was said to have enriched himself in the purchase of provisions. Recently he had been accused of preventing the shipment of flour to Paris, but this morning the mob charged him with having said that "if the people were hungry, they could eat hay." A gang of ruffians had seized him at his *château* of Morangis, in blasphemous mockery crowned him with thorns and given him vinegar to drink, and so dragged him into Paris. La Fayette rushed forward and looked at the crowd—and there was silence. He began to speak:

"You have chosen me for your general; and this choice, which honours me, imposes on me the duty of speaking to you with liberty and frankness. You wish, without judgment, to cause this man to perish; it is an injustice that would dishonour you, and would brand me and all the efforts that I have made in favour of liberty, if I were

feeble enough to permit it. I will not permit it! . . . I want to see the law respected; the law without which there is no liberty, the law without the help of which I should never have contributed to the revolution of the New World, and without which I would not contribute to the revolution that is in preparation."

His words made an impression; the mob slunk back. Foullon tried to speak; La Fayette could hear him stammering through chattering teeth—"respectable assembly—just and generous people—besides, I am in the midst of my fellow-citizens—I fear nothing." But the senile voice was drowned; through the open windows came the howl of the human pack outside.

Three times La Fayette spoke, three times he dominated and silenced the crowd. But the stairways rang with horrid cries, the noise increasing as the mob drew nearer; it pressed into the hall, surged towards Foullon, overturning the chair on which he sat trembling. La Fayette shouted above the clamour:

"Take him to prison!"

Some in the crowd applauded, and the electors surrounding Foullon were about to lead him away, when Foullon had the fatal idea to applaud himself. And that settled it. A voice cried: "You see? They have an understanding!" The mob seized him, hustled him out, hanged him from a street lamp in the Place de Grève, cut off his head, stuffed a wisp of hay between the teeth, stuck the head on a pike and dragging the naked trunk over the stones, joyously paraded the streets.

Meanwhile, Berthier de Sauvigny, the son-in-law of Foullon, had been arrested at Compiègne, and was being brought to the city; on his arrival the mob met him, and by way of greeting thrust through the window of his carriage

the pike bearing the head of his father-in-law. La Fayette had sent forward a force to protect him. He was brought, faint and sick, to the Hôtel de Ville, and committed to the Conciergerie, but on the way some one shot him. Then the monsters cut out his heart, and with the head of Foullon and the heart of Berthier, they marched triumphantly to the Palais Royal. Gouverneur Morris happened to be there, walking under the arcades, waiting for his carriage. He saw the mob arrive with their ghastly trophies, and wrote in his diary that night: "Good God, what a people!"

VII

Aghast at these horrors, La Fayette the next day sent to Mayor Bailly his resignation as commanding general of the National Guard. "The people have not listened to my advice," he wrote, "and the day in which the confidence that they promised is wanting, I must, as I said in advance, quit a post in which I can no longer be useful."

He was at the Hôtel de Ville, weary and disheartened, talking to the good Bailly of his disillusions, when the entire Assembly came, with Moreau de Saint Méry at their head. They were in consternation and implored him to reconsider his resignation; the safety of the city depended upon it. But he was stubborn, and told them that "the bloody and illegal executions of the day before had only too thoroughly convinced him that he was not the object of universal confidence."

In the evening the Assembly held another meeting. Deputations had come from all the districts, the *curé* of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont at their head; they wept, pleaded, implored; but he was obdurate, and at last got up to leave the hall. Then one of the electors, barring his way, flung

himself at his feet. It was a gesture he could not resist; he raised the prostrate suppliant, embraced him and allowed himself to be led back to his seat. They drew up a declaration promising, in their own name and in that of their "armed brothers," subordination and obedience to all his orders.

And so he withdrew his resignation and found himself once more the victim of his own frightful popularity, the idol of this mad populace—and its slave. He was a dictator, or might have been, armed as he was with power that an ambitious and ruthless man would not have scrupled to exercise. But that was not the way of Washington; and he wrote to the presidents of the districts of Paris to recommend that a municipal government be organized and that the powers confided to him be defined. On his advice, the mass assembly was replaced by an elective body of one hundred and twenty members, composed of two delegates from each district of the city, which took the name of the Assembly of Representatives of the Commune of Paris. They met, and again proclaimed Bailly mayor, and La Fayette commanding general of the National Guard of Paris. In his speech thanking them he swore to discharge his duties faithfully and never to forget that the military was subordinate to the civil power. They all swore to obey him, and after so many oaths, Bailly rose and said that there was one more oath to be sworn between himself and M. de La Fayette, and that was to love each other always. And they fell into each other's arms, embraced fervently and kissed each other on both cheeks.

The matter having thus been happily arranged, and with so much emotion, he sent for his old comrade in arms of the Yorktown campaign, Matthieu Dumas, and Gouvion, La Colombe and Poirey, and began to organize the National

Guard. It was an immense task, and when it was completed the achievement was celebrated with pomp in a service at Notre Dame, where the flags were blessed by the Archbishop of Paris. Mayor Bailly, La Fayette and the municipality attended, the Abbé Fauchet delivered a discourse and that evening the Archbishop of Paris gave a dinner in honour of the Mayor and the Commanding General.

He was vastly proud of that "beautiful organization of the first Parisian National Guard, those six superb divisions composed of sixty battalions." He had designed the uniform himself—blue tunic, with red plastron, white pipings and silver epaulettes; on the belt-buckles were displayed the first liberty-caps ever seen in France. But he was not satisfied with the cockade; it was in the colours of Paris, blue and red, which, unhappily, were also the colours of the Duke d'Orléans. That was too significant; he would add a third colour—white, the colour of the Bourbons, the colour of the old flag of France. And he had a new cockade made, blue, white and red, and when he went to lay before the Commune the plan of military organization that Matthieu Dumas had drawn up, he took the cockade with him, and waving it dramatically before their eyes, he cried:

"I bring you a cockade that will go round the world, and an institution, at once civic and military, that must triumph over the tactics of Europe and reduce the arbitrary governments to the alternative of being beaten if they do not imitate it, and of being overthrown if they dare to do so."

On Sunday, August 9, he appeared for the first time in his new uniform, and went to the church of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs for the benediction of the flags. Such cere-

monies were frequent as the organization of the Guard advanced, and a few days later, accompanied by the Marquise, he went to the blessing of the standards of the Cordeliers. To gratify the French Guards he induced the Commune to issue certificates of esteem and gratitude for their good conduct, and a medal was struck in their honour and distributed among them.

But he had no end of difficulty in inculcating his American ideas of equality. The Guards, especially, were difficult to please, and, unfortunately, rather snobbish. When certain actors were made officers, they refused to obey them because they were not gentlemen.

He was at the Hôtel de Ville early and late; held a public audience every day, received deputations, heard complaints, was besieged by men with axes to grind and when he went home to the rue de Bourbon, it was only to be pursued there. Each day, each moment, brought a new problem. The tailors who were fashioning the new uniforms for the National Guard struck work and assembled on the lawns at the Louvre, and he must go and wheedle them into resuming work. Thousands of unemployed labourers who had been set to work cutting down the butte at Montmartre, revolted; he rode to the scene, harangued them, threatened them, cajoled them, and they went back to work, shouting *"Vive La Fayette!"* The turbulent faubourg Saint-Antoine boiled over in riots every day, and he would ride there and disperse the mob. One day a barge loaded with an inferior grade of powder, known as *poudre de traite,* because it was used in the *traite de noirs,* or slave trade, was brought up the Seine. The Marquis de La Salle, one of La Fayette's subordinates, signed the order for its delivery. The workmen who took the order, hearing the word *traite,* and having no idea of its meaning, mistook it

for *traitre;* a mob formed at once and marched on the Hôtel de Ville to hang the traitor. The Marquis de La Salle was driving nonchalantly up to the Hôtel de Ville in a fiacre when the mob arrived. La Fayette ran out to the Place de Grève and began a long speech about the blessings of liberty. The mob stopped to listen; he talked on, and La Salle got away. Then La Fayette told his hearers that, as it was growing late, he was going to bed, and advised them to do the same. And as the crowd left, one citizen remarked:

"I would wager that while he was amusing us with that beautiful speech the traitor was hiding between his legs!"

He had a way with everybody. One day at his public audience a man seeking a favour put forward, in support of his claim, his title of nobility.

"Monsieur," the Marquis assured him, "that is no obstacle."

He was, in fact, quite ready to do away with the privileges of the nobility, and it was a matter of regret to him that his duties at Paris prevented him from going to Versailles on the night of August 4 to attend the memorable session at which all the old feudal privileges were abolished at a stroke. It was Noailles who made the motion, and it was voted, in a great gust of Latin emotion, during which Noailles fell foul of Barnave, and fought a duel with him afterwards.

August 25 was the fête of Saint Louis, and he decided to go to Versailles and pay his duties to the King. It was ticklish business, going to Versailles; the absence of troops might cause trouble at Paris, and their presence create it at Versailles. It was even risky, in that atmosphere of democratic suspicion, to pay court to the King at all. However, with many precautions and some apprehensions, he went,

accompanied by Mayor Bailly and the municipality, and escorted by a small detachment of the National Guard. It was difficult to go anywhere with Bailly, for Bailly was rather touchy and apt to see slights where they were not intended. They got on well together and loved each other always, as they had sworn to do, but it took all his tact. That day he stood aside and allowed the Mayor to do all the honours. They were graciously received by the King and even by the Queen and applauded by the people at Versailles. The National Guard of Versailles, by acclamation, invited him to accept the command of their body, but he refused. Then his own escort asked to be received by the King to present a bouquet, and he marched it, unarmed, under the balcony on which Louis XVI appeared. The Court people thought he was meditating a *coup d'état.*

It would not have been difficult, had he wished, just then, to seize the reins of power, but with a kind of antique purity of motive he held to his principles. He was constantly refusing new distinctions. The Commune voted him a salary of a hundred and twenty thousand *livres* and a hundred thousand *livres* as a fund for entertainment, and the next day refused a salary to Bailly, and allowed him only fifty thousand *livres* for the expenses of his office, to Bailly's great chagrin. But La Fayette declined. In doing so he said that, had his personal situation required it, "I should have asked it, and I beg you to believe that I attach no more importance to the refusal than I should to the acceptance of it. But in a moment when so many citizens suffer, and so many expenditures are necessary, it is repugnant to me to augment them unnecessarily. My fortune is sufficient for the state in which I live, and my time does not permit official entertaining."

Paris was suffering from a shortage of food and in the grip of a mighty fear; the faces in the streets were dark with despondency, a sense of calamity hung over the town. The emigration of the nobles had begun; the Count d'Artois had set the fashion and was the first to flee; and he was followed by the princes of Condé, Conti, Lambesc and Vaudemont. At Montmarte were those hordes of vagabonds and brigands; at the Palais Royal, harlots and the men they kept, gamblers, scoundrels and blacklegs of all sorts, dissolute rakes, companions of the Duke d'Orléans's debaucheries; paid agitators like Danton and Desmoulins and out at Versailles, Mirabeau himself. Up out of the faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau the riff-raff of Paris, the very lees of the city, poured forth every day. Marat, a venomous and repulsive dwarf, who once had had a small billet as physician to the body-guard of the Count d'Artois, was publishing a paper in which, now that they were enjoying the blessings of a free press, he was abusing and vilifying La Fayette.

Even the debates in the National Assembly, instead of allaying fears, only intensified them. They were discussing the question whether or not the new Constitution should give the King the veto power, and the very word "veto" assumed some mysterious and sinister significance in the dark mind of the masses, filling them with the terror of the unknown. Many thought that Veto was the name of some ferocious brigand; some explained that "suspensive veto" meant that the King was to have the right to suspend, that is, to hang, any one he pleased.

On Sunday evening, August 30, the Palais Royal was seething once more with a mob, and Camille Desmoulins, shaking his black, shaggy head, was stammering to the crowd that he had just received a letter from Versailles

telling him that the life of Mirabeau was in danger. In a few moments the word had gone through the crowd that Mirabeau was no more—stabbed—poisoned—done to death by the enemies of the people. An order went forth from the Palais Royal; the people must march to Versailles to protect Mirabeau, to save the nation from Veto, to bring the King and the Dauphin to Paris. St. Huruge, with his blotched, red face, his huge black wig, led a mob down the rue Saint-Honoré, bound for Versailles; a battalion of the National Guard stopped them; they turned and marched to the Hôtel de Ville; La Fayette confronted them, and at sight of him St. Huruge, a great coward, collapsed. La Fayette dispersed the mob, and clapped St. Huruge in the prison of the *Châtelet.* But he was worn out and disheartened.

Do not consider [he wrote to Madame de Simiane] what I can do; I will not make any use of that. Do not consider what I have done; I want no recompense. Consider the public utility, the best interests and the liberty of my country, and believe that I will not refuse any burden, any danger, provided that at the moment of calm I may become a private individual, inasmuch as there remains only one more step to my ambition, and that is to reach zero. . . . If the King refuses the constitution, I will combat him. If he accepts it, I will defend him; and the day in which he surrendered as prisoner to me, devoted me more to his service than if he had promised the half of his kingdom. . . . My situation is very extraordinary. I am in a great adventure, and I like to think that I shall come out of it, without having had even an ambitious impulse to reproach myself for, and after having put everybody in his proper place, I shall retire with a quarter of the fortune that I had when I came into the world. . . . All hell is conspired against us. Bless us with your angelic wishes, and reassure yourself about my situation. I believe that we shall bring the kingdom through all right.

VIII

Out of the innumerable shades of opinion and interest in the National Assembly four parties had evolved; one, that of the Court, with the ideas and prejudices of the old régime; another, that of the Orléanists, with the hope of placing the Duke of Orléans on the throne; then there were the extremists, led by such fanatics as Robespierre and such venal agitators as Danton, Marat and Camille Desmoulins, and lastly a liberal party, the "Fayettistes," inspired by physiocratic doctrines and standing for a constitutional monarchy. But, like liberal parties everywhere in times of stress and crisis, its very moderation made it weak; it had the wisest leaders and the fewest followers.

La Fayette could not attend the sessions at Versailles, but he met often with his political friends at the house of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld to discuss the Constitution. It was sometimes difficult to meet without being observed, and he wrote Jefferson that he would bring a party of six or eight friends to ask a dinner of him the next day. Jefferson, of course, assured him that they would be welcome. The next day La Fayette, with Adrien Duport, Barnave, Alexandre Lameth, Lally-Tollendal, the Marquis de Blacons, Mounier, La Tour-Maubourg and the Count d'Agoult, went to the American Legation. They dined, and at four o'clock, "the cloth being removed, and wine set on the table, after the American manner, the Marquis introduced the objects of the conference." And then, while Jefferson sat by silent, a little uneasy at having his Legation thus coolly used for political conferences, they discussed the form of the legislative assembly and the question of the veto power. Mounier was for the bicameral system, with a chamber of peers; Duport, Lameth and Barnave, like most of the popular

party, were for a single chamber. La Fayette favoured two chambers, elective and temporary; that was the way it was done in America. They sat round the table discussing the subject until ten o'clock. Jefferson was deeply impressed. "I was a silent witness to a coolness and candour of argument unusual in the conflicts of political opinion;—to a logical reasoning and chaste eloquence disfigured by no gaudy tinsel of rhetoric or declamation, and truly worthy of being placed in parallel with the finest dialogues of antiquity, as handed to us by Xenophon, by Plato and Cicero."

But, however classic, such dialogues in a Legation were embarrassing to the Minister. The next morning Jefferson waited on the Count de Montmorin, who had become Minister for Foreign Affairs on the death of Vergennes, "and explained to him with truth and candour how it had happened that my house had been made the scene of conferences of such a character." Montmorin told him that he already knew everything that had passed, and that, far from taking umbrage, he earnestly desired Jefferson to assist at such conferences, being sure he would "be useful in moderating the warmer spirits, and promoting a wholesome and practical reformation."

The Count's spies, who knew so well what was going on at the American Legation, were keeping him informed of more sinister doings at the Palais Royal. Alarmed by the intrigues of the Duke d'Orléans and his faction, as well he might be, Montmorin came secretly to offer to La Fayette the post of *Connétable,* or High Constable of the Realm, an exalted military post long since suppressed by Richelieu. La Fayette replied that the place would add nothing either to his fame or to his determination to defend the King against Orléans, and advised that, in case of danger,

the King should come to Paris where the National Guard would answer for his safety.

Orléans agents were constantly sounding La Fayette, and one day, when he and the Duke had chanced to meet in the *salon* of the Marquise de Coigny in the rue Saint-Niçaise, the Duke had dropped a hint, and afterwards had come to his house in the rue de Bourbon. The Duke had made his proposals so discreetly and so impersonally that La Fayette could pretend not to understand and to say that "liberty was his only affair, and since the people wished, and rightly, to have a King, he thought the present titular better than any other."

Orléans agents, too, were working on the feelings of his Grenadiers, pushing them to march on Versailles, and on September 17, he wrote a letter to the Count de Saint-Priest, Minister of the Interior, putting him on his guard, though, with his usual contempt for his adversaries and always sanguine, he did not consider the danger serious.

Saint-Priest indiscretely showed the letter, and the Regiment de Flandre was ordered to Versailles. The officers of the King's Guard gave a banquet to the officers of the Regiment de Flandre in the theatre of the Château; toasts were drunk, and when the enthusiasm was highest the King and Queen appeared, the Queen leading little Madame Royale and an officer of the Guards carrying the Dauphin in his arms; the regimental band began to play the air from *Richard Cœur de Lion:*

"O Richard! O mon Roi! l'univers t'abandonne!"

The officers leapt on their chairs, raised their glasses, and shouted:

"Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine! Vive le Dauphin!"

Ladies of the Court distributed white cockades and the officers mounted them and cried:

"Vive la cocarde blanche!"

The silly demonstration kicked farther than it carried; the Orléanist factions seized on it to disaffect and inflame the National Guard. Happening to be at Jefferson's house one afternoon, La Fayette spoke of his concern. Gouverneur Morris was there, but before advising him what to do, asked him if his soldiers would obey him.

"They would willingly go to battle with me," replied the Marquis, "but," he added with a wry smile, "they wouldn't mount guard if it was raining."

IX

Early on Monday morning, October 5, he was roused at his house in the rue de Bourbon by a summons to come at once—the mob was besieging the Hôtel de Ville. He went in haste, but when he arrived at the Place de Grève he was surprised to find no mob there. The morning was grey and chilly, and under the low windy sky the Place, swept now and then by gusts of rain, looked almost empty. The troopers of the mounted guard were huddled near the entrance of the Hôtel de Ville, the tails of their horses blown by the wind, and on the edges of the grey, wet triangular Place, groups of men were gathered, shivering with excitement and the chill of the autumn morning.

But inside the Hôtel de Ville he found the debris of riot and the smell of the mob hung yet palpably in the air. For the mob had come and gone. It had appeared early that morning, composed mostly of women of the people, fishwives, women from the wash-boats along the Seine, terrible harridans from the faubourg Saint-Antoine and the

faubourg Saint-Marceau, armed with broom-sticks, axes, knives—whatever came to hand—and streetwalkers from the Palais Royal, escorted by their *maquereaux,* revolted soldiers of the Guards, who lived on the earnings of their shame. And to these was added an element even worse; the underworld of Paris had vomited up its hordes of criminal, diseased and drink-sodden outcasts, the scum and offscouring of the city.

The night before the Palais Royal had been the scene of one of those violent gatherings so frequent in its unsavoury history; Danton had bellowed, Marat had screamed, Camille Desmoulins had spluttered, inciting the crowd to march on Versailles, avenge the insult to the tricolour cockade, and bring the King to Paris. Then on this wild October morning, when the people went to the bakers they were told that there was no more bread—some one had cut off the supply.

And now they gathered, these tigerish women, and less ferocious men disguised as women, for blue, unshaven cheeks and chins showed under many a bonnet, and heavily shod feet under many a tattered skirt. Danton, Marat, Camille, Gonchon and Santerre were not there; they always took precious good care to keep out of the line of fire themselves. Maillard, generalissimo of the brigands, wearing a shabby black coat and carrying a sword, and Jourdan Coupe-tête of the long black beard and terrible visage, who had cut off the heads of the victims of the mob, and cultivated in the Parisians a taste for gory human heads on pikes, were the only leaders who dared show themselves. But Théroigne de Méricourt, the Belgian *demi-mondaine*—Anne Terwagne of Maricourt, with black Walloon eyes, introduced to the Duke d'Orléans by the Prince of Wales in London, and set up by the Duke in a house in the rue

de Bouloi, where she called herself the "Countess de Campinados"—she was there, mounted on a black horse, *svelte* in her scarlet riding-habit, with black skirt and black hat, escorted by a jockey in the same colours, for red and black were the racing colours of the Duke d'Orléans.

They poured into the Place de Grève, shouting *"A bas La Fayette! A bas Bailly!"* They had pelted the National Guard, battered down the doors of the Hôtel de Ville, swarmed inside, rung the tocsin, pillaged the armoury and swept out again dragging two cannons with them, shouting that La Fayette and Bailly were traitors and must be hanged to the lantern. Then this wild dishevelled crew, led by Maillard beating a drum, had swept away towards the Champs Elysées. . . .

The General learnt all this on his arrival at the Hôtel de Ville. Bailly was not there; Santerre, commander of a battalion in the National Guard, and the Duke d'Orléans's man, had invited him into the country, and Bailly had gone.

He sent an escort to fetch the Mayor back to Paris; ordered out reinforcements for the National Guard, and dispatched couriers to Versailles to inform the King and the National Assembly. Bailly came; the Commune deliberated. The reinforcements of Guards began to arrive. But not the Guards alone; crowds of armed men came with them. Looking down from the windows of the Hôtel de Ville into the Place de Grève, La Fayette saw now a black mass of people that overflowed into the adjacent streets and on to the nearby quays. They were armed with every sort of weapon—guns, pistols, pikes, knives fastened to staves, scythes, pitchforks—and soon soldiers and citizens were confounded indistinguishably in that mob, milling like a maddened herd of cattle and bellowing now no

longer "Bread! Bread!" but instead "On to Versailles! On to Versailles!"

He went down, stepped out on the stone perron and faced them. The mob shouted *"A Versailles!"* and rushing for the lantern, began to take down the reverberator. Would the Guard obey? He dared not order them to clear the Place; they were inextricably entangled with the mob. He ordered them not to move, and there was the old loyalty.

About eleven o'clock he was sitting with the Committee on Police, presided over by the Abbé Fauchet. A crowd in the hall outside was shouting his name, and he went out to find a number of his Grenadiers and former soldiers of the French Guards. One of the Grenadiers, a young fellow named Mercier, stepped forth and said:

"Mon Général, the King is deceiving us all, and you with the rest. He must be deposed; his son will be King. You will be Regent and then everything will go well."

Though the voice was that of the honest young Grenadier, he knew that some one else was speaking; a regency was an old idea of the Orléans faction, only it was not La Fayette who was to be Regent, but the Duke himself.

"Eh bien, mes enfants!" he said, "you do not mean to make war on the King, do you, and force him to abandon us?"

He had touched an old chord; there was still in them, as in the nation, the traditional respect for the sovereign.

"We love him well," they said.

And so, for the moment, they were satisfied and went away. But outside in the Place de Grève, the crowd was steadily growing larger, and the bellow of its wrath constantly swelled. The various cries—for bread, for revenge on the bodyguard for trampling on their sacrosanct cockade,

the oaths and curses, became indistinguishable in the roar.

Time and again he went out on the perron and harangued the mob. There it was before him, that tossing, angry mass, bristling with its crude and terrible weapons, those black bobbing heads, those uplifted faces hideous with passion, those wide, red mouths, distorted with rage, vomiting out upon him vile and obscene epithets, and crying out for his life—and only yesterday he had been their idol! Time and again they took down the lantern to hang him; time and again guns and pistols were levelled point blank at him. But he would not flinch.

Inside the Hôtel de Ville the will of the Commune was weakening; some of the deputies were in favour of surrender; would it not be better to let the National Guard march to Versailles? Perhaps the long ten-mile tramp in the rain might wear them out and damp their enthusiasm. But he held out against them as he had held out against his own soldiers and against the mob. The military power must be kept subordinate to the civil; it was for the Commune to give the order, not him. . . . He was worn out with resistance, hoarse from shouting and fuming with rage. Still he braved the mob, still he strove to restrain his troops, growing more and more restless and impatient, while the long afternoon wore on. What was going on in the world outside he had no notion; they were hemmed in by that mob, so dense that no one could pass in or out with news. And yet, about four o'clock, word somehow reached the Hôtel de Ville that the mob that had gathered early in the morning, after having been reassembled in the Champs Elysées, had set out for Versailles. The news thrilled through the crowd.

He went out once more to the perron, and attempted to

speak. But the storm rose, angrier than ever, and beat upon him; his words were blown away.

"It is not for La Fayette to command the people," a voice shouted above the tumult, "it is for the people to command him!"

He made another effort; but the mob rushed towards him in fury. It was no use. He was powerless. His troops were getting out of hand. He could either go with them or let them go without him, to lose all discipline, to degenerate into a mob themselves in the anarchy that all day had been bellowing mutiny and insurrection in their ears. After some terrible moments of uncertainty and hesitation, he decided to go; if he could not appease this tempest, he would ride it, perhaps in the end control it. He would try to protect the King and the convention, to uphold the law and government. The Commune gave him written orders and assigned two commissioners to accompany him. He mounted his white charger and gave the command. The National Guard began to cheer, the Grenadiers moved out, the rabble followed. Thus, with this motley band trooping close on the heels of his Grenadiers, La Fayette, in the gloom of that late afternoon, after eight appalling hours of resistance to that mob, set out on the long march in the rain to Versailles. From the terraces of the Tuileries as they passed, the crowds shouted *"Vive La Fayette!"* But the applause of those elegantly dressed idlers on the terraces of the Tuileries, the *vivats* of his own troops, had no charm for him now; he rode on, weary, sick at heart, in the humiliating consciousness that he was following, not leading now—blown along by the fury of this mob, as the yellow leaves from the chestnut-trees were blown along the parterres of the Champs Elysées by the wild autumnal wind.

But as he rode along in the early dark of the October

day, his mind was already busy with schemes of turning this defeat into victory, as Washington had done at Monmouth, as he himself had done at Barren Hill and in the Virginia campaign; his hope returned; things never seemed quite so bad to the Marquis as they really were.

They reached Sèvres; the little town was dark and silent, the shutters up at every window. He halted the column at the bridge and sent the officers on to Versailles to announce his coming, then, as he said, he crossed the Rubicon, that is, the Seine, flowing darkly under the bridge at Sèvres, and plodded on through the rain and the mud and the night.

It was midnight when they reached Versailles. One of the King's officers came to meet them, with a message to say that the King "regarded his approach with pleasure and that he had just accepted *his* Declaration of the Rights of Man."

He halted at the turning of the road that led to the Salle des Menus Plaisirs, and addressing his troops, made them renew their oath of fidelity. Then, before giving the order to march again, he went into the National Assembly to present his respects to the President.

He found the dim hall, where the candles sparkled, filled with a drunken mob and reeking with the smell of wet garments, the fumes of cheap wines and the stench of filthy bodies. A few members of the National Assembly were stoically making a pretence of continuing their solemn deliberations, as in some antique and classic manner, dying at the post of duty, while the world fell in ruins about them. The mob from Paris had arrived early in the evening, invaded the hall, taken the seats of the deputies, spread through the galleries, occupied the boxes and, having brought in pastry and wine from a restaurant, proceeded to

ingurgitate them. The prostitutes of Paris swarmed over the President's dais, rang the bell, mounted the tribune, shouted ribald pleasantries to the grave deputies. Mounier, the President, had gone to the Château to obtain the King's sanction to the new Constitution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and in his absence the chair was occupied by the Bishop of Langres. The prostitutes danced the *cancan* under his nose, mocked him with obscene jests, and then shouting, "Now you must kiss us, *calotin*," smothered him with their sticky caresses. Some of them shouted for Mirabeau, always popular with the rabble.

"Where is our Count de Mirabeau—where is our little mother Mirabeau?" they cried.

The Tribune was, of course, shocked and scandalized; he began to thunder against this invasion of the people's dignity.

"Bravo!" the prostitutes shouted, clapping their hands, "Bravo, Mirabeau!"

In the midst of this pandemonium Mounier returned with the paper signed by the King—the royal sanction, which he proceeded to read aloud. But the streetwalkers were not interested in the rights of man, or concerned about constitutional guarantees, and they began to scream:

"Will that give bread to the poor?"

And the turmoil began again. Mounier in despair put on his hat, suspended the sitting and left the chair; the members began to file out of the hall. But the rabble insisted on their remaining; the brigands threatened them, and the Conscript Fathers resumed their session, and began, not inappropriately, to discuss the reform of the penal code.

It was at this juncture that La Fayette strode into the hall with his aides. The apparition of the tall figure in uniform somewhat subdued the rabble, many of whom

indeed were already fallen asleep on the benches; he spoke to Mounier, reassured him, presented his respects to the Assembly, and stopped a moment to hear the news. It was bad enough; besides this irruption into the National Assembly, other hordes had gone to the Château, with a deputation of women to ask the King for bread.

The King had been hunting that day at Meudon, and when an equerry had come with the note from the Count de Saint-Priest, informing him of the arrival of the women, he had galloped back to Versailles; the Count de Luxembourg had asked for orders for the Guard.

"Orders?" the King had said. "Against women? You must be joking, Luxembourg."

He had received the deputation of women in the kindest manner, and given orders that all the bread in Versailles be distributed.

The mob had tried to enter the courtyard of the Château, and had stoned the Guard; but they had refrained from firing, and Louis XVI had ordered the Guard withdrawn.

La Fayette left the Assembly, mounted his horse and his column moved up the Avenue de Paris, to the roll of drums and the glare of torches. The Place d'Armes was lit up by bonfires about which the wet and bedraggled horde had settled down to spend the night. Over one of the fires the rioters, in their sodden rags, had roasted and now were eating the flesh of a horse of the King's bodyguard, killed in the fray. Women, soaked to the skin and besmattered with the mud and filth of the road, huddled before the fires, weeping in their misery; others, in drunken fury were dancing like witches round the fires, shrieking curses and imprecations against the Queen, La Fayette, the Archbishop of Paris. They were especially violent against

the Queen: "She has danced for her own pleasure, now she shall dance for ours!"

The scarlet riding-habit of Théroigne de Méricourt gleamed in the firelight as she moved from group to group. Now and then they cried, *"Vive le Duc d'Orléans!"* Some thought they saw the Duke d'Orléans stalking there; others Mirabeau, brandishing a huge sword. If he had been brandishing any sword it would have been a huge one, but whether or no, he was of the Orléans faction, and in that multitude there moved many a roué of the Palais Royal, dressed in woman's clothes, the Duke d'Aiguillon among them, and Sillery, the husband of Madame de Genlis, one of the mistresses of the Duke d'Orléans and governess of his sons.

La Fayette halted his troops at the Château, dismounted and, accompanied only by the two commissioners of the Commune, walked up to the iron gates; they were closed and padlocked and the sentinels refused to open them. The courtyard inside was filled with Swiss Guards. A captain came to parley, and when La Fayette said that he wished to enter, expressed his astonishment at such temerity.

"Yes, Monsieur," said the General, raising his voice for the Guards to hear, "and I shall always find myself with confidence in the brave regiment of Swiss Guards."

Inside the vast pile of the Château he found the Œil-de-bœuf full of excited courtiers who turned on him the malignant glances that he had been accustomed to receive at Court ever since they had learnt that he was really in earnest about those American notions that were good so long as they were used against England, and so bad as soon as they were applied to France. As he was crossing the Œil-de-bœuf one of the courtiers cried out in derision:

"There goes Cromwell!"

"Monsieur," rejoined the Marquis, "Cromwell would not have entered alone."

He presented himself with the two commissioners at the door of the King's cabinet, and was announced by the Marquis de La Tour du Pin.

He was spent with fatigue, and as he stood before the King, his emotion for an instant overcame him.

"Sire," he said, "I thought it better to come here and die at the feet of Your Majesty, than to perish uselessly in the Place de Grève." And he asked the King his orders for the night. They talked for a few moments; the King asked what the people wanted, and La Fayette said "bread"; and his Grenadiers, old members of the King's bodyguard, wished to take their former posts near His Majesty.

"Very well," said the King, "let them take them."

It was thus arranged. The bodyguard then on duty, the Swiss sentinels in the gardens and four hundred mounted bodyguards at the Trianon would remain under the command of the King's own officers, and subject to his orders.

On his way out he stopped a moment to speak with the Marquis d'Aguesseau, a major in the bodyguard, who was much concerned for the safety of the Château. Jauge, a banker at Paris, one of the commissioners sent by the Commune, was standing by. They had talked for a quarter of an hour, when a young officer of the Guard, very much frightened, came up and whispered in the ear of Aguesseau, who turned and said:

"Monsieur le Marquis, what I had the honour to predict to you has happened; the people are marching on the *hôtel* of the bodyguard and threaten to attack it. It is urgently necessary that you go there to re-establish order."

But the Marquis, with that coolness which was sometimes so exasperating to his own people, who always mistook

it for a stupid indifference, was not alarmed. He was rather used to the effervescence of the mob by this time; and besides, Washington had always kept his head, never allowed himself to get excited. And so he reassured the young officer of the Guards, told him that he had given the necessary orders, and added that he was overcome with weariness and must go and get some rest. But Aguesseau insisted, and to satisfy him La Fayette said that he would go and see. He went with the Count de La Marck and Jauge down to the Cour des Princes, where La Marck's carriage was waiting. He asked La Marck to give him a lift as far as the *hôtel des gardes,* and they had hardly driven out of the court when a group of noisy and drunken men, armed with pikes, stopped the carriage. La Fayette thrust out his head and asked:

"What do you want, *mes enfants?*"

"We want the heads of the bodyguard!"

"And why?"

"They have insulted the national cockade. They trampled it underfoot. They must be punished for it!"

"Keep still, I tell you," said La Fayette. "Trust in me. All is going well."

He told Jauge to give them some money, and the banker handed out three *écus;* the men were satisfied and allowed the carriage to pass. Near the great iron gates La Fayette got out of the carriage, and La Marck drove away.

He was so weary that he could scarcely walk, but his troops outside were weary too, and wet to the skin after their long seven-hour march in the rain. He went then to see that they were lodged for the night, posted a battalion of his Grenadiers at the *hôtel* of the bodyguard and ordered patrols in the town and about the Château.

In the park, near the Trianon, under the dripping trees,

was a detachment of horse, four hundred strong, under the Duke de Guiche, waiting mysteriously in the night for some order. Was the King meditating flight?

At two o'clock in the morning, La Fayette presented himself once more at the door of the King's apartments, but entrance was denied him; the King and Queen had retired. He assured himself, though that was not his responsibility, that the posts about the apartments were occupied by the bodyguards under the King's orders. The great Château had settled down for the night. He left the palace; the troop of horse in the garden under the Duke de Guiche had disappeared—gone to Rambouillet, some one said. The town was silent, the great houses along the avenue de Paris and the avenue de Versailles were closed and dark, their shutters up, in the deathly quiet of their fear. The Place d'Armes was almost empty; a few dim figures huddled about the dying bonfires. The great Château of the Roi Soleil loomed dark and mysterious in the night.

La Fayette went to the lodgings of his old friend, the Count de Montmorin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the Cour des Ministres, near the place where his Grenadiers were bivouacked. He was so tired that he could no longer stand on his feet; he was going to take some rest, but he sank into a chair, too weary to go, and he and Montmorin talked until the dawn was grey.

He then went to the *hôtel* de Noailles, not far from the Château, where he had lodged his staff, and prepared some urgent dispatches for Paris. He was almost exhausted, after twenty hours without food or rest; one of the servants brought him bread and wine, and he was about to lie down at last and take his rest, when an officer of the Guard suddenly burst in; an alarm had come from the Château—the mob again.

He snatched his hat, buckled on his sword, shouted an order to summon all his Grenadiers, rushed out of the house, leapt on the first horse he saw and galloped off through the chill fog of the morning to the Château. It was a quarter to six o'clock.

X

The mob had burst through the side gate into the Cour Royale, and surged round through the archway by the chapel, across the Cour des Princes, and towards the marble staircase. The brigands had fallen upon the bodyguard; but Aguesseau, at the King's command, had ordered the Guards not to defend themselves.

"Messieurs, the King begs you not to fire."

And those brave men, at the word of their soft-hearted sovereign, victims of what Mirabeau, in one of his striking phrases, called his "sincere and inert virtues," had heroically allowed themselves to be cut down. Deshuttes was killed and his body dragged into the Cour des Ministres, where Jourdan Coupe-tête cut off his head, and then, in maniacal fury, smeared his own face and his great beard with the blood that gushed from the headless trunk; the mob went raving mad, besmeared themselves likewise with blood and danced about the corpse.

Then, crying out for the "heart of the Queen," they rushed up the grand staircase of the Roi Soleil, their heels clattering on the wide marble steps, ragged and ferocious brigands of the *faubourgs,* wild, dishevelled slatterns, brandishing their primitive weapons and screaming:

"Where is the *f—— coquine?* We will tear out her heart! We will make cockades of her entrails!"

Some one, with significant familiarity, led the way to

the hall of the Queen's guard, separated from her own apartments by two large antechambers. They battered down the great double doors, and the Guards, forbidden to fire, could only interpose their own bodies. Varicourt, one of the officers, was killed, and his head cut off to adorn a pike beside the head of Deshuttes; the doors fell with a crash of splintered panels; the Guards were forced back into the Grande Antechambre. Du Repaire guarded the next door; he was struck down and dragged away; Miomandre de Sainte Marie rushed forward and saved his life. He went on to the door of the Queen's antechamber, and cried out to Madame Augué, one of the Queen's women, to save Her Majesty. Then he and Du Repaire and Luillier drew their swords and stood their ground.

For a moment they held the mob at bay, while young Victor de La Tour-Maubourg, a subaltern in the Guards, slipped into the Queen's chamber and led her through a narrow, secret passage to the Œil-de-bœuf and across that great hall to the King's chamber.

The mob overbore Miomandre and his two companions, beat down the door, swarmed into the chamber of the Queen and, their rage increasing at finding her gone, rushed on into the Œil-de-bœuf. And there they were confronted by La Fayette.

He had summoned his Grenadiers and put them under Cadignan with Cathol and Gondran and a brave young man of one-and-twenty, named Lazare Hoche, a born soldier of dash and daring, then a sergeant-major, and one of the purest figures of the Revolution. They had rushed to the defence of the bodyguard, while La Fayette himself, with a detachment of Grenadiers, had hurried to the royal apartments, and on the way rescued a group of the bodyguard from the mob; one of the mob cried out, "Kill La

Fayette!" and the Grenadiers leapt upon the fellow and dragged him towards their commander, the wretched head striking the rough paving stones, crack, crack, as they did so. He reached the royal apartments. A chamberlain appeared—since the etiquette of the place must be observed even with the world in chaos—and said gravely:

"Monsieur, the King accords you the entrée of his cabinet."

He joined the King, and said to his men:

"Grenadiers, you will not suffer the brave men of the King's Guard to be basely assassinated! Swear to me on your honour!"

"We swear!" they shouted, with tears in their eyes.

"I confide the King and the royal family to your loyal protection," he said. "Swear to me that you will die for them!"

"Vive le Roi!" they cried.

The Grenadiers went to the Salle des Gardes and rattled the handle of the door.

"Who knocks?" came a voice from within.

"Grenadiers!" said Gondran.

Chevanne, an officer of the Guard, opened and stepped forth.

"Messieurs," he said calmly, "do you seek a victim? Here am I—take me. I am one of the commanders of this post; to me belongs the honour of being the first to die in defence of my King!"

Gondran advanced and held out his hand.

"Far from wishing to take your life," he said, "we come to defend you against these assassins."

And then, with tears of joy, Guards and Grenadiers fell into one another's arms.

The mob still raged, but now that La Fayette and his

Grenadiers had arrived the brigands had had enough, and Grenadiers and Guards swept them like refuse out of the palace.

He went out on the balcony and harangued the mob in the Cour de Marbre below, but the roar of voices drowned his words as it had drowned them at Paris all that day before—at a time that now seemed to him incredibly remote, long ago in the past. The mob was still bawling its obscene abuse of the Queen, making signs of vengeance at each mention of her name, and demanding that the King come to Paris.

In the confusion of the palace the King was trying to hold a council of state. Montmorin and La Luzerne were too badly shaken to reach decisions; Necker, in a corner, was sobbing in his hands. La Fayette was invited to the council, but he declined; the question of leaving Versailles and going to Paris was one that must be decided without his advice. The King finally decided to go, and appearing on the balcony announced this decision to the mob. Then the mob began to shout for the Queen, who was in the King's bedroom with her children. La Fayette went to her.

"Madame," he asked, "what is the intention of the Queen personally?"

She was still in the wrapper with yellow stripes that she had hurriedly drawn on when she had fled from her chamber; her fair hair was in disorder; she was deathly pale. She looked up into his eyes.

"I know what fate awaits me," she said, with a certain simplicity and grandeur of soul, "but my duty is to die at the feet of the King and in the arms of my children."

Strange that they should be thus face to face in this cold October dawn, after that ghastly night, they two, between whom, ever since they were children, there had been a kind

of dumb hostility! Strange that she should be under his protection now!

"Madame," he said, "will you come with me?" He waved a hand towards the balcony.

"What! Alone on the balcony! Did you not see the signs they made?"

She shuddered at the memory. La Fayette remembered; they were, in fact, terrible. And yet—dared he risk it, that inspiration which suddenly had come to him?

"Yes, Madame," he said. "Come, let us go out."

She looked an instant at him, and then said:

"Very well."

She stepped out on the balcony. He tried to speak, but it was no use; no one could be heard in the roar that rose from the mob. The Queen gathered the thin folds of that yellow-striped wrapper about her, and stood there, pale and of a tragic beauty in the pitiless morning light.

Then La Fayette, sweeping off his hat, bowed, dropped on one knee, and raised her hand to his lips with the courtly gesture of the old régime that was tumbling into ruins about them. He had thought it hazardous, but it was decisive—the *beau geste* never lost on the melodramatic consciousness of the French crowd. A moment before they had been calling for her head and threatening to cut out her heart; now there rose a mighty roar:

"Vive la Reine!"

And then, an instant after:

"Vive La Fayette!"

The King, standing just inside the entrance to the balcony, came forward, for once deeply moved, and full of gratitude.

"And now," he said, "what can you do for my Guards?"

"Bring me one of them," said La Fayette.

The King beckoned; a tall guardsman stepped out on the balcony. La Fayette, taking the blue, white and red cockade from his own hat, stuck it in the hat of the guardsman, then threw his arms about him and kissed him on both cheeks.

And the crowd, frantic with emotion and delight, cried fervently:

"Vivent les gardes-du-corps!"

It would have caused any one else to despair of the human race, and even the stout optimism of the Marquis for once was shaken. On the way to Paris that day as he rode beside his old friend the Count d'Estaing, who commanded the National Guard of Versailles (and had not done a hand's turn that night), he said that the atrocities he had witnessed had made a royalist of him.

Before they set out the King was minded to send his aunts, with Madame Elisabeth, his sister, to Bellevue. But Madame Adelaide begged La Fayette to intercede with the King to let them go with him, which he did, and the King yielded. And then Madame Adelaide embraced him, and exclaimed:

"I owe you more than my own life; I owe you that of the King, my poor nephew."

The King turned over to him the command of his own royal troops, and it was practically as a dictator that he rode back to Paris. The Guards had mounted the tricolour cockade, and the long, tragic procession was to start at midday. He arranged the order of his turbulent column as best he could to save the King and the royal family from indignity. He sent the rabble on ahead, ribald harlots astride of cannons, wild harridans drunk with wine and blood, waving branches of poplar, singing the obscene songs of the Paris gutters. With them trooped the brigands and

all the rogues and scoundrels that the minions of the Duke d'Orléans had assembled for this attempt on the throne he coveted, and as they marched they had a new cry:

"We bring you the baker, the baker's wife and the baker's boy."

He had placed several battalions of the National Guard behind the mob, to separate them from the state coach in which rode the King and Queen, with little Madame Royale and the Dauphin. La Fayette rode beside them on his white horse, but he could not be everywhere, and in spite of all his precautions, insults were offered to them—not the least of which was that they endured as they moved through Passy. There the Duke d'Orléans was standing on the terrace of his house, with his sons Louis Philippe, Duke de Chartres, and the Duke de Montpensier, and Madame de Genlis, looking with ignoble satisfaction on this humiliation of the Queen who had always refused to receive her at Court.

At sight of this domestic group the mob began to shout: *"Vive le Duc d'Orléans!"*

They were seven hours on the way, and night had fallen when they drove across the Place Louis XV, past the equestrian statue of Louis XVI's less deserving, but more fortunate predecessor. The weary and humiliated Queen wished to leave the column at the Tuileries instead of accompanying the King to the Hôtel de Ville, where the strange protocol of the Revolution required him to show himself. She beckoned to La Fayette, and he bent towards the window of the carriage. Would it be safe for her to do that? He asked Moreau de Saint-Méry what he thought; the old president of the Electors of Paris had his doubts; he hoped that Her Majesty would go to the Hôtel de Ville. And so through the crowded rue Saint-Honoré La Fayette once

more led the King to the Hôtel de Ville—this time a captive of the rabble. But he could have no feeling of triumph now; they might call him Cromwell—and he might have been a Cromwell, had he wished, that day—but his feeling now was only one of pity for the King and royal family and of relief that it had turned out no worse than it had, far better indeed than he had expected.

It was quite dark when they reached the Hôtel de Ville, where Bailly, with the members of the Commune, was bowing low on the perron. They alighted, and as they were going into the Hôtel de Ville, La Fayette suddenly felt a woman's hand slip into his own, and press it fervently. He turned, and there behind him was Madame Elisabeth, her good, kindly, plain face, with its great Bourbon nose, turned up to him, her eyes fairly overflowing with gratitude.

Bailly, in his graceful literary way, pronounced a little address of welcome, and the King replied that he had come "with joy and with confidence to his good city of Paris." The poor King's voice was so weak from the exhausting emotions of that day that he could not make himself heard, and Bailly repeated his words to the Commune and the people. In doing so, however, he forgot to repeat the word "confidence." The Queen perceived the omission instantly.

"You forget, Monsieur," she reminded the Mayor in clear tones, "that the King said 'and with confidence.'"

And instantly the gallant Bailly said:

"Messieurs, in hearing the word from the lips of the Queen, you are happier than you would have been if I had not made the mistake."

The cortège set out once more, lighted by links and at last, at half-past nine, the great coach with the King and the royal family rolled across the Place du Carrousel and into the Cour Royale of the Palace of the Tuileries.

XI

La Fayette awoke from the nightmare of those October days to find one thing clear at least—it was all the work of the Duke d'Orléans. He had had his suspicions, and he could not help it if his old grudge against the Duke had intensified them. But now, looking back over the past few months, recalling the reports of his spies at the Palais Royal, the hints of Orléans agents, his meeting with the Duke in the *salon* of the Marquise de Coigny and the Duke's visit to his house in the rue de Bourbon, putting this and that together, he was sure. He might have known it all before, but however one might dislike the Duke for his criminal intrigues, his debauchery and his crapulous life, one did not lightly attack the head of the cadet branch of the House of Bourbon and first prince of the blood. But on the morning of October 7 he felt that he was powerful, too, more powerful, in fact, than ever before. His popularity may have suffered a partial eclipse during those hours of hesitation in the Place de Grève, but on this morning, after his rescue of the King, and that gallant gesture at the feet of the Queen on the balcony, it shone more brilliantly than ever. He sent a note to the Duke asking him to meet him that afternoon in the *salon* of the Marquise de Coigny.

They met in the *salon* of the Marquise and drew aside into a quiet corner; the Duke with his English clothes, his dashing, sportsmanlike manner, was wearing his confident smile, but when La Fayette looked into his blue eyes the smile began to fade.

"Monseigneur," he said, "I fear that the head of some one of your name will soon be on the scaffold."

The Duke raised his eyebrows.

"What? You mean—"

"You intend, Monseigneur," La Fayette went on, "to have me assassinated, but if you do, you yourself will be assassinated an hour later."

"I assure you, on my honour, my dear Marquis," protested the Duke, "that I know of no such plot. I could not be guilty of such a thing."

The Marquis inclined his head slightly.

"I must accept the word of honour of Your Royal Highness," he said. "But, Monseigneur, you must leave France. The King has descended several steps of his throne; but I have placed myself on the last; he will descend no further, and in order to reach him, you will have to pass over my body. You have cause for complaint against the Queen, and so have I, but the time has come to forget all grievances."

He was rather imperious, and as the conversation continued, the Duke became somewhat resigned; but there was the question of appearances, of saving the Duke's face. Since the Duke was a boon companion of the Prince of Wales, what more plausible and convincing for the public than to say that he had gone to London on a diplomatic mission? The Duke consented, and La Fayette came away feeling that it was all arranged. But the Duke consulted his friends, Mirabeau and Lauzun, now deep in the Orléans intrigue, and Mirabeau advised him "not to submit to the dictation of the Mayor of the palace." That evening La Fayette received a note from the Duke saying that he had changed his mind.

He sent another note: "If Monseigneur will have the goodness to give me his orders as to the hour at which I may have the honour to see him, or if it will be convenient for him to-morrow, after dinner, to pay a visit to Madame

de Coigny, I shall take advantage of the occasion to say a few words that may interest him."

They met again at Madame de Coigny's and had another little talk; the Duke promised to leave Paris within twenty-four hours, and to clinch the matter, La Fayette took the Duke up in his carriage and drove to the Tuileries. There he told the King what had passed and, trying to carry it off, the Duke, doubtless because it was an axiom of the French that every evil thing in the world was the work of *"la perfide Albion,"* said that, in London, he would try to discover the author of the troubles that had occurred.

"You are more interested in that than anyone else," La Fayette observed drily, "since no one is so badly compromised as you are."

The Duke promised again, but that night Mirabeau threatened to wheel the great guns of his oratory into action, and at the bar of the National Assembly to denounce this high-handed conduct of La Fayette. And so, at dawn, another note from the Duke; he would not leave. La Fayette appointed a third rendezvous, this time at the cabinet of Montmorin, where the Duke had agreed to present himself to receive instructions for the important diplomatic mission that was taking him to London. There, then, they met again.

"My enemies," said the Duke, "pretend that you have proofs against me."

"It is rather my enemies who say that," La Fayette replied. "If I were able to produce proofs against you, I should have had you arrested already." He paused, and added, "But I am now hunting for them everywhere."

Four days later the Duke d'Orléans left for London, accompanied by his mistress, Madame de Buffon, daughter-in-law of the famous naturalist.

The action of La Fayette in exiling the Duke d'Orléans—for no one was fooled by the pretence of a diplomatic mission—created an enormous sensation. Mirabeau was furious. He could not bear to hear the Duke's name mentioned. "They pretend that I am of his party!" he said. "Why, I would not have him for my valet!"

Now that the Duke was out of the way, Mirabeau was La Fayette's only rival. La Fayette controlled the National Guard, the only military force in the kingdom. He was all-powerful with the National Assembly which realized that, without him, it would have been brushed aside by the Court party or by the anarchists. The King was virtually his prisoner in the Tuileries. He could have done anything he pleased with the Revolution if he had not had principles, just as Mirabeau could have done if he had had them. They did not like each other; Mirabeau flattered him to his face and behind his back made him the butt of his incomparable irony, while on his side he had no respect for Mirabeau and took no pains to hide the fact.

But events were driving the two rivals into each other's arms. The King was too undecided to save himself and too suspicious to trust anyone else save him. Mirabeau called him a ball of cotton; Montmorin said that when he spoke to the King of his situation, the King acted as though he were speaking of matters relating to the Emperor of China. Monsieur, the King's own brother, said to the Count de La Marck: "The indecision of the King is beyond all words. To give yourself an idea of his character, imagine balls of oiled ivory that you vainly try to keep together." Marie Antoinette herself wrote to Mercy, the Austrian ambassador, "You know the person I have to deal with. At the moment in which one thinks him persuaded, a word, an argument, changes him before you know it."

The King asked La Fayette for his advice, and he prepared a long *mémoire* at the end of which, thinking of Washington at Mt. Vernon, he said: "My sense of delicacy and my reputation demand that the end of the Revolution should be marked by my complete abandonment of all political existence."

The only use the King made of this disinterested advice was to lock it up in his strong box, the *armoire de fer,* with much other good advice. With such a King as prisoner, and surrounded by ministers stripped of the powers they had not known how to use, France was sinking into anarchy. The country must have a government, and it must be formed of the material existing in the National Assembly, with La Fayette at its head. The Count de La Marck, an Austrian nobleman and friend of the Queen, came to see him; the Count wished to bring about an understanding between him and Mirabeau; with a good deal of reluctance he consented to an interview with Mirabeau, and they met, but came to no conclusion other than that a change of ministers was imperative.

It was one point at least on which all agreed, and in the *salons* of Paris, men, and especially women, who played a part in politics that was shocking to Thomas Jefferson, were engaged in the congenial business of making a new ministry. Gouverneur Morris, calling in the rue de Bourbon, told La Fayette that he considered a change of ministry necessary, and advised him to select men of talent and energy. With this counsel of perfection he agreed, and told Morris that he had already spoken to Mirabeau. Morris regretted this step; he did not approve of Mirabeau; he thought him a rascal. But they could not talk at their ease just then, in a crowded and buzzing *salon,* and he asked Morris to come to dinner the next day.

The dinner was a large one, and when they rose from the table they retired to his *cabinet,* where they discussed all the possible candidates; they all lacked something, but none in Morris's eyes was so bad as Mirabeau. Three days later Morris came to the rue de Bourbon again, and La Fayette allowed him to wait a long while in his antechamber; and when at last he received him, Morris began to advise him again. La Fayette asked him what he thought of Malesherbes for Privy Seal, and La Rochefoucauld for the Interior. Malesherbes would not accept, said Morris, and La Rochefoucauld had not sufficient talent. And Mirabeau?

Mirabeau, said Morris, was a man so dissolute that he would dishonour any government; no one could have confidence in a man who had so little principle.

The characterization coincided perfectly with his own opinion, and yet it vexed him; he was not seeking reasons for excluding Mirabeau from the ministry, but reasons for admitting him. How, indeed, was he to form a ministry and leave Mirabeau out?

He was tired of Morris's counsels. He did not like Morris, with his pompous manner, his insufferable self-conceit and sufficiency, and his humourless eyes of porcelain blue. Morris, in a word, bored him to death—and he took small pains to hide the fact. He was relieved when Morris got up and stumped out angrily on his wooden leg.

Then La Marck came and placed in his hands a long memorandum drawn up by Mirabeau, with this flattering introduction:

"There is a man in the State, who . . . in some sort, is the guarantor of the repose, one may even say of the safety of the public, which comprehends at the same time the subsistence, the finances, the obedience of the army and

the peace of the provinces. Who is that man? It is M. de La Fayette."

Then another document came—a long letter from Morris, giving seven reasons, carefully numbered, why La Fayette should not enter a ministry at all.

In the face of so much advice he hesitated, and yet, he allowed the clever La Marck to persuade him to meet with Mirabeau. The place of meeting was fixed at Passy, at the house of Madame d'Aragon, Mirabeau's niece. La Fayette went with La Tour-Maubourg to find Alexandre Lameth, Adrien Duport, Barnave and Laborde de Méréville in the *salon*. Mirabeau sat in a large arm-chair, "a dissolute and flaccid Hercules at ease," with his enormous buttons and his enormous buckles, his eyes soft and caressing. The discussions began, and La Fayette declared that if Mirabeau wished to have any dealings with him, he must renounce all projects to pursue the Queen.

"Very well, General," assented Mirabeau, all flattery and complaisance now, "since you wish it, let her live. A Queen who has been humiliated may be useful; but a Queen who has had her throat cut is only good as a subject for a bad tragedy by that poor Guibert"—an allusion to the Count de Guibert, who had written a play called "Anne de Boleyn."

The tribune tossed his great head with its carefully arranged mane of curled and powdered hair; he half closed his brown, seductive eyes, but a smile was adumbrated in his heavy pock-marked face; La Fayette knew that this sanguinary speech was but one of those by which Mirabeau liked to shock people, but in some way it was reported to the Queen.

After that he had many meetings with Mirabeau, and it was not long before he found himself entangled in a maze

of bewildering political intrigue, for which, with his delicate sensibility and his idealism, he was never cut out. Mirabeau lost no opportunity to flatter him, and at this moment of his indecision there was offered an occasion of which the tribune took the fullest advantage. The National Assembly had followed the King to Paris, and held its sessions in a hall of the Archiepiscopal palace until the Manège could be prepared to receive the deputies. The long, low building of the old riding-school, fronting the terraces of the Tuileries, its drab ungainly façade somewhat brightened by the blue and white striped awnings of the cafés and drinking bars that had attached themselves like parasites to its flanks, had been transformed. Long rows of benches, upholstered in green, were arranged inside, with a high dais for the President and a tribune facing it for the orators. And here, on October 19, the Assembly met for the first time in Paris, and La Fayette, accompanied by Mayor Bailly and members of the Commune, appeared at the bar to present the felicitations of the city and the National Guard. The whole vast assembly rose and acclaimed them, and before the deputies had sat down, a titanic figure with leonine head and broad shoulders was advancing towards the tribune in a brusque, imperious way, and a moment later Mirabeau, in a pompous and slightly ironical eulogy of La Fayette, was moving a vote of thanks:

"What an administration! What an epoch, in which it was necessary to fear all and to brave all! In which tumult was born of tumult, in which a riot would be produced by the very means that were taken to prevent it; in which it was necessary, without ceasing, to be moderate, and, where moderation seemed equivocal, to appear even timid and pusillanimous; an epoch in which, when force seemed to be

tyranny, it was necessary to deploy a great deal of force; an epoch in which a leader is besieged by a thousand counsels, and must take counsel of himself; in which he is obliged to distrust even those citizens whose intuitions are pure, but whose suspicions, disquiet, and exaggeration render them almost as dangerous as conspirators; in which by wisdom he is compelled, even in difficult situations, to cede, to give in, to conduct the disorder that he may restrain it. . . ."

The periods rolled on; the oration came to an end; the thanks were voted. Later in the day La Fayette received a letter from Mirabeau:

"Whatever comes, I will be yours to the end, because your great qualities have strongly attracted me, and because it is impossible for me to cease to take a very lively interest in a destiny so beautiful and so closely bound to the revolution that is leading the nation to liberty."

After all this he could do no less than invite his eloquent and disreputable admirer to dinner. But eloquence, however much applauded, was unpaid; Mirabeau's debts, like everything about him, were on a gigantic scale; he had to raise the wind somehow, whilst La Fayette had that lofty disdain of money in which a grand seigneur who had never known the want of it could so nobly afford to indulge himself. They met every day, and discussed the question—a place in the ministry, which Mirabeau desired, or an Embassy, which La Fayette wished him to accept. Montmorin was ready to give him the Embassy to Constantinople; but it was not on the shores of the Bosphorus that Mirabeau intended to deploy the mighty forces of his unscrupulous genius.

In the midst of these political intrigues, where it was so hard not to lose his way, tormented by his own indecision,

and burdened by his task of quelling the daily disorders and the constant riots, La Fayette's old friends were beginning to desert him. Mounier, disgusted by the events of the 5th and 6th of October, had washed his hands of the Revolution, and gone home to Dauphiné. La Fayette quarrelled with Alexandre and Charles Lameth, who were offended by his expulsion of the Duke d'Orléans, and opposed to his measures for quelling disorders; Barnave and Duport joined their faction. La Fayette and his intimate friends, La Rochefoucauld and La Tour-Maubourg, were anxious to establish a constitutional government and finish the Revolution. The Lameths thought that the Revolution had not gone far enough, that disorder should continue; they must, as Duport said, "plough deep." They became his open enemies, and in revenge organized the club of the Jacobins, and secretly formed in each battalion of the National Guard a knot of ten men who, under their orders, would incite to disorder and mutiny.

Thus it was more than ever necessary, as La Marck argued, for La Fayette and Mirabeau to unite. And the tiresome negotiations continued. Montmorin authorized him to offer Mirabeau fifty thousand francs, and the post of Ambassador to London or The Hague; Mirabeau accepted the money, but refused the Embassy, and drew up a plan for a new ministry; La Fayette was to be Prime Minister and be made a Marshal of France.

He was persuaded, at last, to accept. "Reciprocal confidence and friendship; that is what I give and expect," he wrote to Mirabeau.

But Gouverneur Morris came to his house and assured him that Mirabeau was lost in the eyes of the National Assembly, because he had refused to fight a duel with M. Cocherel, a peppery deputy from San Domingo; Mirabeau

had explained that, since the code of honour had been suppressed, the point of honour could no longer exist.

"And you think then," asked La Fayette, "that he is lost in their eyes?"

"Talleyrand assures me that he is."

It was maddening, this pulling and hauling, this inability to make up one's mind!

La Marck came; they talked for hours, and he agreed to another rendezvous with Mirabeau. They met, and Mirabeau left dissatisfied, reporting to La Marck, "You have seen the man as he is; equally incapable of breaking faith or of keeping his word *ad tempus*."

Mirabeau decided to bring the matter to a head, and on November 6 moved in the Assembly that the King's ministers be invited to attend its sessions and take part in its discussions. It meant the establishment of parliamentary government, and met with great opposition. The astute Keeper of the Seals, Champion de Cicé, Archbishop of Bordeaux, induced the Assembly to vote a counter proposition that no member of the Assembly be allowed to accept a place in the ministry.

But Mirabeau still insisted that the ministers should be chosen among members of the Assembly, and had La Fayette possessed the temper—and the technique—of the politician, they might easily have brought the Assembly to reconsider its decision. "The Assembly," Mirabeau remarked to him, "is an unbroken wild ass, that can only be ridden with a great deal of clever handling." But his instinct and his pride led him to repulse Mirabeau's advances. The tribune made another effort on December 1, 1789; and wrote: "Ah, at what time have I failed to warn you that your dizzy position and the fatality of your personal indecision were blinding you to the impossibility of

rendering permanent a state of things that success alone could justify? When, in paying homage to your qualities, have I not declared that your taste for mediocre men and your feebleness for your own views, would cause the most beautiful career to miscarry, and in ruining you, compromise the public good?"

The tone of this letter offended him; he made no reply and treated Mirabeau with greater disdain than ever.

When he heard that the Duke d'Orléans was on the point of returning to France, he took with him an even loftier tone, and sent one of his aides-de-camp, Boinville, over to London to say to the Duke that if he came to Paris he would have to fight a duel the next morning.

And he had foes, of course, in his own household. His cousin, Lieutenant-General Marquis de Bouillé, who had been groomsman at his wedding, was then commanding the garrison at Metz, and as a convinced royalist detested all the new-fangled ideas that were upsetting a world in which he found himself so comfortably situated, and blamed La Fayette for them. The Marquis de Chastellet, a friend of Bouillé and of La Fayette, tried to bring them together, with the usual result in such well-meant interventions.

And then, on Christmas Eve, a plot to assassinate La Fayette, Bailly and Necker was discovered, and the Marquis de Favras was arrested and locked up in the Châtelet.

But in the midst of so many difficulties he had the joy of receiving once more a letter from Washington. They had not exchanged letters since the Revolution began, and Washington, who had been elected President, wrote that "the new and difficult affairs in which we have both been recently engaged form our mutual excuse."

Short, Jefferson's secretary, was sailing for home, and the Marquis confided to him a letter for Washington. "How

often, my well beloved General," he wrote, "have I longed for your wise counsels and your friendly support; . . . *Common Sense* is writing for you a brochure in which you will see a part of my adventures." (*Common Sense* was Thomas Paine, who had come to France to aid in the Revolution.) He sent to Washington "a picture representing the Bastille as it was a few days after I had given the order to demolish it," and with it "the principal key of that fortress of despotism. It is a tribute that I owe you, as a son to my adopted Father, as an aide-de-camp to my General, and as a missionary of liberty to its patriarch."

He had been too much engrossed by all the intrigues behind the scenes and the riots in the streets to take an active part in the discussions of the National Assembly, but now that the disorder was spreading to the provinces and the Assembly, somewhat disorderly itself, was violently debating means of suppressing it, he attended the sessions. He was in favour of rigorous measures and made a speech arguing the necessity for martial law. In the course of his speech he said: "The Revolution having been accomplished, nothing remains but to establish its constitution. For the Revolution, disorders were necessary, the old order was nothing but servitude, and in that case, insurrection is the most sacred of duties; but for the constitution it is necessary that the new order assert itself, that the persons of individuals be in security; we must cause the new constitution to be loved, the public power must exercise force and energy."

It was of the irony implicit in life that a speech proposing the strongest measures for putting down disorder should be cited as an encouragement to uprisings; his enemies seized on one phrase of his discourse—"insurrection is the most sacred of duties"—tore it from its context and on all occa-

sions quoted it against him; he was never to hear the last of it. Cousin Bouillé, off there in Metz, was in despair when he heard this shocking heresy, and gave his cousin up as a hopeless revolutionary. Perhaps the characterization had a certain impressionistic truth in it, for he was consulted constantly as a kind of professional expert in revolutions. Not so long before he had been invited to lead a revolution in Holland; he had been in the counsels of the Irish, always in revolt, and now his advice was sought on the revolution of Brabant that had broken out at Brussels in that stormy month of October, against the House of Austria. He examined the question sympathetically, but came to the conclusion, perhaps reluctantly, that the revolution was "illegal," since the Belgian Congress did not emanate from the people.

And then General Paoli, the old Corsican patriot, was at Paris, and had written to him: "In your eyes the pretension of the Corsicans to liberty should have a merit superior to that of the Americans. In this age of oppression, Corsica was the first to raise the standard of liberty against tyranny."

Madame de Simiane was always preaching to him deference for the King and Queen; it was unnecessary, for he greatly pitied them in their misfortune; "but believe me," he urged her, "they would have been better served by a harder man. They are big children who only swallow salutary medicines when one scares them by talking of the werewolf. . . . I am made very happy by your sentiments, but I feel that six months from now I shall owe excuses to whomever has the torment to love me. Speak of me to all the beings, animate or inanimate, who recall the days that were so sweet and that I long to see come again."

When the King, before the National Assembly, solemnly accepted all the decrees that served as the basis of the Con-

stitution, he wrote to "lay at the feet of Your Majesty the gratitude of a pure and sensitive heart that knows how to appreciate his kindness and respond to his confidence. Let us trust, Sire, that your benevolent intentions will be fulfilled. When the people and the King make common cause, who can prevail against them? I, at least, swear to Your Majesty that if my hopes are deceived, the last drop of my blood will prove to you my fidelity."

He addressed another long memoir to the King, which so fully convinced Louis XVI that he, with his own hand, endorsed it with his approval, and added: "Fully reassured . . . by the loyalty of his character and his attachment to my person, I promise to M. de La Fayette the most entire confidence, in everything relating to the establishment of the Constitution, my legitimate authority as it is set forth in the *Mémoire* and the restoration of public tranquillity."

The King put the original in the *armoire de fer,* but he wrote out and signed a duplicate of the engagement and gave it to La Fayette, who, as a gallant man, handed it back with the remark that the King's word was sufficient.

He thought that now he was on the best of terms with the King, and when Madame de Simiane advised him to go to the church where the Queen was making her Easter, he obeyed. The Queen appeared "to be well pleased by his politeness," and both she and the King urged him to come to an understanding with Mirabeau. But he refused, saying, in his haughty way: "I do not like him. I do not esteem him. I do not fear him. I see no reason why I should seek an understanding with him."

Mirabeau, as had been promptly reported to him, had invented a new name for him and now dubbed him Cromwell-Grandison—Mirabeau seemed to know his Richardson —and at the same time was seeking a *rapprochement.*

He received a letter from Mirabeau, who was now ready to accept an Embassy, and admitting that he had received money from the King, expressed the desire to have more, in order to pay his debts. Mirabeau terminated his letter thus:

> Monsieur le Marquis, it is rare that such confidences are made in writing; but I am very glad to give you this mark of confidence, and this letter has even another end in view. If ever I should violate the laws of the political union that I offer you, make use of this letter to show that I was a false and perfidious man in writing it to you. This is sufficient to show you whether or not my intention is to be faithful to you. Excepting this one instance, this letter is to be an inviolable deposit in your hands.

La Fayette thought the letter a stroke of genius, for while nothing could bind its author, he himself was bound to silence by the delicacy of a gentleman. He treated the offer with the old disdain, and sought a counterpoise by founding a new political club, the Society of 1789, with Bailly, Talleyrand, Siéyès and Condorcet, to promote a policy of moderation. At the same time Mirabeau was meeting with the Queen at Saint-Cloud, where it was decided that he was to write out memoirs for the King's advice, for which the King paid him six hundred thousand *livres,* and fifty thousand *livres* a month.

The rivalry between him and Mirabeau now became a kind of mute struggle for power and influence over the King, and yet, when the Assembly was debating the question whether the nation, by a clause in the Constitution, should delegate to the King the right to declare war and make peace, and Mirabeau proposed that war should be declared only by the National Assembly, on the proposition of the King, La Fayette made a flaming speech in support of Mirabeau's motion.

The Assembly was swept by a gale of applause, and shouted *"Bravo, La Fayette!"* Mirabeau was delighted; the prospects of a *rapprochement* seemed to be sensibly brightened.

The debates in the Assembly stirred up the rabble; there was more rioting. He was driving to the Hôtel de Ville one May morning with Louis Romeuf, one of his aides, when he heard that a riot was in progress on the quay de la Ferraille. He drove there at once, to find the mob clubbing to death a man accused of having stolen a bag of oats. La Fayette sprang out, laid about him with his sword, bestrode the prostrate body and, facing the mob, demanded that they point out the guilty; a member of the National Guard pointed out a man, whom La Fayette seized by the collar; "I am going to show you that any function is honourable when one is executing the law," he said, and hustled his man to the Châtelet, not far away. When, a moment later, he came out of the prison, the National Guard was ready to surround and protect him.

"Take away the bayonets!" he cried. "The force of the law is sufficient!"

He leapt upon the parapet of the quay and began to harangue the crowd, telling them that they were a pack of cowards and that not one of them dared to make an attempt on his life.

Whilst he was delivering this defiance the crowd at the other end of the quay had taken the man whom he had left for dead, and were proceeding to hang him. He sprang down, and with Romeuf rushed to the scene and saved the miserable victim. Then the mob conducted him in triumph to his carriage, shouting:

"Vive La Fayette!"

Marat published in the *Friend of the People* one of his

most scathing articles charging that La Fayette had "the art of making himself loved—a quality highly dangerous to liberty."

XII

Mirabeau might dub him "Cromwell-Grandison" or, cribbing Choiseul's wit, sneer at him as "Gilles-Cæsar," but he still sought an alliance, and La Fayette received another letter, quite the most remarkable of all those by which Mirabeau sought either to utilize, or to destroy, the popularity of his only rival.

What I still have to say to you [wrote Mirabeau], would become embarrassing if, like many others, I were swollen with fear of the opinion of men, that noxious weed of all virtue; because what I think and wish to declare to you is that I am worth more than all that, and that, one-eyed perhaps, but one-eyed in the kingdom of the blind, I am more necessary to you than all your committees put together. . . . Oh! Monsieur de La Fayette! Richelieu was Richelieu against the nation for the Court, and, while Richelieu may have done a great deal of injury to the public liberty, he did a fairly great deal of good to the monarchy. Be Richelieu over the Court for the nation, and you will make over the monarchy anew, while enlarging and consolidating the public liberty. But Richelieu had his Frère Joseph; have then also your Eminence Grise, or you will lose yourself and not save us. Your great qualities have need of my impulsion; my impulsion has need of your great qualities; you listen to little men, who, for small considerations, by petty manœuvres and with narrow views, wish to render us useless to each other, and you do not see that in view of the fact that your stupid partisans have more and more decried me, more and more thrust me aside, it is necessary for you to unite with me and to believe in me. Ah! you forfeit your destiny!

He had been charged with aspiring to be a Washington,

a Cromwell, a Monk; now Mirabeau proposed that he be a Richelieu and take him for his Eminence Grise! He smiled to himself. He was no Richelieu, and he knew it; and he knew that Mirabeau did not think him one, though he did not know that, on that very same day, the man who, with his tongue in his cheek, could thus write and propose himself for the rôle of Eminence Grise to a man whom he ridiculed all over Paris, was writing the first of his highly paid confidential reports to the King, telling him how to weaken the power of La Fayette and destroy his popularity. Two days later they met at the house of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, but could come to no agreement though, outwardly at least, their relations continued to be what they always had been. Thus, when the Marquis received word from America that Franklin had died, or, as Mirabeau put it, "returned to the bosom of divinity," he asked Mirabeau to announce the fact to the National Assembly and the orator did so in his most impressive style, and paid an eloquent tribute to the philosopher and patriot, "to whom antiquity would have erected altars."

They found themselves, however, opposed to each other in a discussion that took place in the Assembly on the night of June 19, Alexandre Lameth had moved that the figures of slaves in chains on the statue of Louis XIV be taken down because the figure of La Franche-Comté was among them, and the sight would pain the provincial deputies who would soon be arriving for the celebration of the 14th of July.

The question was of that banal impersonality which politicians love, because it affords them a chance to attack an abuse without offending any interest, and every one wished to be heard. In the turmoil Lambel cried: "Since it is necessary to efface all the monuments of pride, we must

not tear down statues only, we should suppress all these titles of Duke, Marquis, Count—"

He could not achieve his phrase in the storm that arose; La Fayette, when he could get the floor, supported the proposal with all his warmth.

But how then, demanded Foucault de Lardimalie, was merit to be rewarded? With what, for instance, would he replace the title of nobility in a family like that of Périgord which bore, in substance, the mention: "Such an one is made noble and count for having saved the State on such a day?"

"We will suppress," replied the Marquis, so soon to be plain Monsieur—and later on merely Citizen, so was equality expanding in the world—"the words 'made noble and count' and say simply, 'Such an one saved the State on such a day.' It seems to me that these words have something of the American character, precious fruit of the New World, that must serve in large measure to reinvigorate the Old."

And so, in a great gust of enthusiasm it was moved to abolish all titles of nobility. The Right, however, where titles predominated, did not care to go quite so far in imitating the austere and lofty virtues of the Americans—they were growing rather weary, indeed, of hearing La Fayette talk about America—and they bitterly opposed the motion. Mirabeau rushed to their rescue, but the motion was voted, and La Fayette sacrificed his marquisate to the rage for levelling. The Revolution was getting down to business.

After that night he bore his title no more; he became General, wrote his name a little less aristocratically as Lafayette, and in due time by the erosion of the rising tide of democracy, even his particle was worn away.

Mirabeau, in reporting to the King on "last night's de-

mentia," said that it was urgently necessary for the Queen to persuade La Fayette to accept him as a collaborator. They must either control La Fayette or crush him. In accordance with this suggestion the King, with the aid of the Queen and the Archbishop of Toulouse, wrote a letter in which he virtually commanded La Fayette to join with Mirabeau, allowing Mirabeau to manage the Assembly whilst he attend to his military duties. The King, however, did not send the letter; he locked it up in his strong box instead. But the Queen summoned La Fayette to the Tuileries, and begged him to come to an understanding with Mirabeau, employing all her arts and cajoleries to persuade him. He listened humbly, did not say no—it was hard to say no to a Queen who could be as charming as Marie Antoinette when she tried. But he did not come to an understanding with Mirabeau.

In spite of his enemies, from the throne to the sewers of Paris, his popularity kept on growing. Medals, one by the sculptor Duvivier, were struck in his honour and distributed among the National Guards. When Madame de-La Fayette fell ill—it was thought that she had the scarlet fever, and the General refrained from paying his court to the King for fear of infection—the Commune sent a delegation to inquire how the invalid was going on, and La Fayette's popularity may be said to have reached its apogee when his figure was added to the waxworks of Curtius in the Palais Royal.

He kept open house, and, what was even more highly appreciated, a free table, at which parasitic politicians and needy journalists, like Brissot, fed regularly and copiously. He paid no attention to his affairs, kept no accounts, spent money with a lavish hand and a noble indifference, was the prey of an army of hangers-on, spies, informers and

adventurers; they swarmed in his *salons* where he received with the elegant affability of the old régime curiously mixed with the democratic familiarity of the new order; they flattered him, "borrowed" money, lived off his confiding bounty, and ate him out of house and home.

And then he heard that the Duke d'Orléans was coming back, and once more he sent Boinville to London, not, however, to repeat the defiant challenge of eight months before, but to represent to His Serene Highness, more diplomatically, that "the same reasons that had determined him to accept his mission" to London still existed, and that perhaps certain persons might misuse his name to create public alarm. Mirabeau advised the King to consent to his return because "the Prince at the Court will be one more embarrassment for La Fayette," and the King weakly yielded. La Fayette found himself in a difficult position, but since the King was ready to admit once more the man who was scheming for his throne, and had organized so much of the mob violence that was sweeping it away, he could do little. Besides, the Constitution was practically finished and accepted by the King, the Revolution was almost accomplished, peace and order were in sight at last, it was a time for amnesty and conciliation. They were in July; the Fête of the Federation was at hand, and he forgot all else in preparations for the glorious celebration of the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille and the dawn of liberty.

For weeks vast armies of workmen had been transforming the Champ de Mars into a colossal amphitheatre; but the work was not going on fast enough; citizens of all ages and classes, soldiers, abbés, monks, actors, sisters of charity, women of the Halles, came to lend a hand. They worked all day long, and at night by flaring torches, wielding pick and shovel, trundling wheelbarrows after the heavy

carts. Bands played to lighten their labours, and as this strange, excitable people worked frantically in a kind of communistic hysteria, levelling the ground as though they were levelling society, they sang a new levelling song that had for refrain a phrase that old Franklin used to employ whenever he wished to reassure anyone—or put him off.

"Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!
Celui qui s'élève, on l'abaissera!"

Meanwhile the delegates were pouring into Paris. Along all the roads of France they came, members of the National Guard, veterans of the Seven Years' War, grizzled old non-commissioned officers, old soldiers of fortune, old sailors from the coast of Brittany, their faces bronzed and beaten by the sea—they all came hobbling to Paris—and as they hobbled along they too sang:

"Ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!
Lafayette dit: Vienne qui voudra!"

Along the way the peasants and the people lodged and fed them, forced them to stop and clink a glass to the new brotherhood, the era of universal goodwill that had dawned. Fourteen thousand delegates, elected by the three million National Guards in France, met at the Hôtel de Ville, unanimously proclaimed La Fayette president of the Assembly of the Federation, and he led a deputation of them to the Manège and presented them to the National Assembly in an impassioned speech.

From this scene the General led his delegation to the Tuileries and presented them to the King, to whom he also made a speech. "Enjoy, Sire, the prize of your virtues; let this pure homage, which despotism never could com-

mand, be the glory and the recompense of a citizen King!"

As they were coming away, they begged the General to present them to the Queen. They were from the provinces and had never seen her; but they had heard of her beauty—and her dissipations. The General readily consented, though he said that he would make no official harangue to the Queen, as that was due only to the Assembly and the King. They were received in audience by Her Majesty, and made their duty. Several of the National Guards kissed the hand not only of the Queen, but of the Dauphin, and the Queen, with the little prince in her arms, bore him round the circle, that all might perform the same ceremony. She bore him round and the soldiers kissed the boy's hand, until suddenly the Queen looked up and saw La Fayette standing there, with austere republican disapproval of such a ceremonial. She held out the Dauphin's hand no more to be brushed by the moustaches of those Grenadiers.

That night thousands of people bivouacked on the Champ de Mars, fearing that they could not find places for the spectacle on the morrow. It began to rain, but the Parisians, in one of their moods of gaiety, only laughed:

"The sky is aristocratic!" said some one. The bit of wit was repeated all round the field, each time with a happy air of originality and apropos. By daylight a hundred and sixty thousand persons were seated on the mounds of earth that had been thrown up around the arena; as many more were standing. In the centre of the enormous plain stood a high altar, reached by wide flights of steps; before it at one end of the oval, dominating the scene, were tribunes, hung in scarlet, for the King and royal family and the National Assembly. The vast crowd waited, under that low, leaden sky. From time to time the showers fell. "The sky is aristocratic!" The joke ran round the enormous

oval, and everybody laughed again. A long chain of people from the provinces, linking hands and weaving about in the *farandole,* the folk-dance of Provence, danced in the mud, singing *"Ca ira! ça ira!"*

After a long wait the King and the Queen and the Dauphin and the members of the National Assembly arrived and entered the tribunes. The Queen was in ill humour; the Assembly had not placed her on a throne beside the King, but had assigned her to a box, which she considered inferior in dignity, as no doubt it was intended to be, at this feast in celebration of a new era of constitutionalism. And she was greatly irritated when La Fayette, seeing that a crowd of the National Guards had gathered under her box, galloped across the field and sharply ordered them back to their posts at the altar of the nation. Some of the aristocratic party, aided by the Jacobins, had proposed that the King mount the altar when he took the oath, instead of taking it in the midst of the National Assembly, but La Fayette was determined to keep the King in his place that day. He saw to it that the dignitaries of the State were seated in a constitutional manner. The National Guards, troops of the line and sailors debouched in column on the plain, each department with its banner, the oriflamme of Paris before them all and at the head the General with his staff. He was mounted on the white horse that played such a picturesque rôle in the Revolution; many of its most tumultuous events swirled about it, and the horse became almost as famous as its dashing rider. Stories were told of its prowess; it even became a subject of political division, there was a party for and a party against it. Its enthusiastic admirers said that it had cost fifteen hundred louis, and that it had a lineage as long and noble as that of its rider; its detractors, on the other hand, said that it

was an old screw, cast off by the riding-school of the pages when beginners scorned to mount it. Some said that its name was *l'Engeant,* but the Parisians had their own name for it; they called it Jean Leblanc. A cult grew up around it, and good citizens, trembling in their boots, hailed its arrival on scenes of violence with relief and delight. As he pranced about on Jean Leblanc, commanding the evolutions of the Guards, the vast multitude became almost delirious, forgot the King, forgot the National Assembly, forgot the rain, forgot everything and thundered forth:

"Vive La Fayette! Bravo La Fayette!"

He reined his horse before the high altar and sat there, statuesquely, surrounded by his staff. The trumpets blew and there was silence. On the altar, with the smoke as of sacrificial fires floating from great urns, surrounded by two hundred priests girt with sashes of blue and white and red, and to the music of a thousand instruments, Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, celebrated the mass in which he did not believe.

"Don't make me laugh," he said to La Fayette as he mounted the steps.

"Haec missi est," intoned Talleyrand, in his frail voice. The mass was over. Detachments of the Guards advanced and dipped their banners to Talleyrand to be blessed. Then La Fayette wheeled his horse, drew his sword and flashed it over his head as a signal; the National Assembly rose and repeated the oath of constitutional fraternity. The crowd shouted:

"Vive l'Assemblée!"

La Fayette flashed his sword again in signal to the King, and Louis XVI rose, and began to repeat his oath: "I, King of the French"—no longer King of France, the Command-

ing-General would have them note—"swear to use the power that the constitutional act of the State has delegated to me, to maintain the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by me."

The multitude roared:

"Vive le Roi!"

And the Queen, ignored and thrust aside, disgusted by all this silly nonsense about the people and their constitutions and delegated powers, the Queen rose and took her little boy, the Dauphin, frail symbol of the old order that had been swept away, and held him up to the gaze of the crowd.

"Here is my son!" she cried.

And the crowd roared:

"Vive la Reine! Vive le Dauphin!"

Then La Fayette galloped to the royal tribune, reined his white horse to its haunches, drew his sword, saluted and asked for the orders of His Majesty. He saluted again, wheeled his horse about and galloped back to the altar.

"Look at Monsieur de La Fayette!" said a man to Thiébault. "He gallops down the ages to come!"

He dismounted, and slowly went up the high flight of steps, bowed before the altar, laid his sword on it, and repeated the oath to be forever faithful to the nation, the law and the King; to uphold the Constitution and to remain united in the indissoluble bonds of fraternity. Banners were lifted high, sabres flashed, the Assembly and the people in the stands stood up and in unison they thundered:

"We swear!"

And salutes from forty guns thundered across the plain, proclaiming to Paris that the pact was made.

But the multitude would not allow him to descend from the high altar; he had become in that moment the object

of a veritable cult. "They seemed to demand that he remain exposed to the public veneration." When he came down at last the soldiers of the National Guard swarmed upon him, kissing his cheeks, his hands, even his coat. He could hardly mount his horse, and when he was once more in the saddle, they kissed his boots, the housings of his horse, and at last kissed Jean Leblanc himself, who loved applause as much as his master and accepted it as graciously.

The humiliated Queen sat in her second-rate box, and tossed her head with a haughty contempt she scorned to hide. And Mirabeau, unnoticed in the tribune, gazed at the spectacle. For once, words, phrases, epithets, failed him; he could only stare at this—to him—impractical theorist, this romantic dreamer, this picturesque knight-errant on the white charger, this strutting play-actor, *cabotin,* this Cromwell-Grandison, this Gilles-Cæsar, fairly sousing in the frenzied adulation of the masses and completely effacing King, Queen, Assembly, to say nothing of the worthy and debt-ridden Mirabeau. Why, the silly fellow held in the hollow of his hand this army, the only force left standing in the kingdom, and he hadn't sense enough to use it! "He might do anything, everything," he exclaimed, "and he attempts nothing!"

That night the people danced on the ruins of the Bastille.

XIII

He had been fond of saying "we republicans" in his younger days, but he had no idea that a republic could be established in France, and he was consistently in favour of a constitutional monarchy.

"If I were forced to choose," he said one day to Louis XVI, "between liberty and royalty, between the people and

the King, you know very well that I should be against you; but so long as you are faithful to your civic duties, I will sincerely uphold constitutional royalty."

Another day he said to him:

"You know that I am naturally a republican, but my principles themselves make me at present a royalist; I would not engage myself in honour to defend the authority that has been delegated to you, if I were not already engaged to do so by my principles."

And once he said to the Queen:

"You, Madame, should have all the more confidence in me because I have no sort of royalist superstition; if I believed that the destruction of the monarchy would be useful to my country, I would not hesitate, or weigh the matter, because that which is called the right of a family to the throne does not exist for me; but it is clear to me that in the present circumstances the abolition of the constitutional monarchy would be a public calamity. More confidence is to be placed in a friend of liberty who acts from a sense of duty, patriotism and conviction, than in an aristocrat who acts from prejudice."

But it was idle to talk to Marie Antoinette. She was a woman guided, not by reason, but by prejudice and self-interest. It was all a personal affair with her; the Revolution was a personal affront, and La Fayette was responsible for it. The Queen complained that she was the prisoner of La Fayette—the Mayor of the Palace, as Mirabeau craftily called him as though he were another Charles Martel or Pepin le Bref—but she, like most monarchs, was far more the prisoner of her sycophantic and infatuated *entourage*—the Polignacs, the Guémenés and the rest, who kept from her all knowledge of what was going on in the mad world outside.

Washington, in writing to thank the Marquis, as he still was to him, for the key of the Bastille and the picture of its demolition, and to send him a pair of shoe-buckles ("not for the value of the present, but as a souvenir, and as a sample of the manufacture of this city") said: "I am happy, my excellent Friend, that in the midst of the frightful tempests that have assailed your political vessel, you have been able, by your talent and your courage, to steer it until now in so sure a manner amongst so many reefs. . . . How much gratitude all those who are interested in that adventurous voyage will owe to the chief pilot when, by his efforts, the ship shall have reached the port where it will find tranquillity, liberty and glory!"

But the ship just then was making heavier weather than ever, and the chief pilot was far from any port where there were tranquillity and liberty and glory for him. Mirabeau had recommended that everything possible be done to "countermine Monsieur de La Fayette in public opinion, though it must be done as insensibly as possible."

But what the King and Queen could not do, he did himself, and precisely in an effort to preserve the authority of the crown. The *Sabbat,* the organization created by Duport and the Lameths, had been at work, and there had been serious revolts among the troops at Nancy where Cousin Bouillé was in command. Three regiments had rebelled; the Assembly ordered Bouillé to punish them, and La Fayette wrote to his cousin to say that the execution of the orders should be "whole and vigorous." It was vigorous enough; Bouillé put down the rebellion with a bloody and remorseless hand, and La Fayette wrote to congratulate him as "the saviour of the public cause." He not only wrote to Bouillé, but he induced Mirabeau to move, and he himself spoke in favour of a vote of thanks to the commander,

and when the mob gathered near the Manège to protest against the "massacres of Nancy," he placed himself at the head of the Grenadiers, and dispersed it. It was a terrible blow to his popularity. The people who, two months before, had been kissing his boots, now began to shout:

"À bas La Fayette!"

Marat, in his *Friend of the People,* held up to public indignation the "shameful artifices of Sieur Motier to engage the Parisian army to cover itself with opprobium in approving the massacre of the patriots of Nancy." He called La Fayette "a soul of mud," a "greedy courtier," a "perfidious swindler," a "vile panderer to despotism." Pamphlets multiplied; "The Baseness of the Blue Army and the abominable conduct of General de La Fayette"; "Confession of Paul-Eugène Motier, alias La Fayette, to the Abbé de Saint-Martin"; "Second Revelation of the Crimes of Paul-Eugène Motier, alias La Fayette." Camille Desmoulins accused him of being "an ambitious officer who, feeling that his soul was not great enough to play the rôle of Washington, was awaiting the moment to play that of Monk."

The Court party made merry, and Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, poring at evening over Mirabeau's twentieth note to the King, could rejoice to read:

> Popular outbreaks are the ruin of M. de La Fayette, because without making a single partisan the more for him, they make enemies of all those who are irritated by licence and are always ready to attribute it to negligence, to false measures or even to the connivance of authority. . . . To speak only of an event easy to foresee, it is possible that the shame of tolerating an insurrection at the side of an army of thirty thousand men, will one day lead M. de La Fayette to order them to fire on the people. Then, by that act alone, he will deal himself a mortal wound.

His friends and partisans did their best by protestations and addresses to compensate him for so much injustice. The Commune of Paris sent deputations to felicitate and encourage him. They renewed the offer of salary that they had made the year before, but he refused again. "In persisting in my refusal I do not make a parade of false generosity; far from disdaining it, I should be disposed, not only to accept it, but even to ask of the people, to whom I have consecrated my fortune and my blood, an indemnity for my expenditures, if that same fortune did not place me beyond want; it was considerable; it has been sufficient for two revolutions, and if, for the happiness of the people a third should come, it will belong to the people in its entirety."

It was no mere elegant and empty gesture; in 1777, when he went to America, he had an income of one hundred and forty-six thousand *livres,* and in July, 1789, one hundred and eight thousand. On August 10, 1792, he had only eighty thousand. His devotion to liberty had cost him a million five hundred thousand *livres.*

The opposition pandered to the libidinous imagination and prurient taste of the crowd. The interviews that La Fayette frequently had with the Queen were made the basis of obscene and preposterous libels. Marat, sitting in his slipper-bath, to quiet the incessant tortures of his lingering disease, was writing for the *Friend of the People,* "Anecdotes of the Dictator Motier." Camille Desmoulins, in the *Revolutions of France and Brabant,* reported a conference between the Queen and La Fayette at the *château* of Saint-Cloud, and drew the most malevolent inferences. Pamphlets were published, representing La Fayette as the lover of the Queen; "Amorous Evenings of General Motier and the lovely Antoinette, by the little spaniel of the Austrian." In

another, "The confession of Marie Antoinette, former Queen of France, of her amours and her intrigues with M. de La Fayette," the Queen was made to say:

> But having everything to fear from La Fayette, it was necessary to employ with him all the arts of which a woman, and above all a German woman, is capable. Prayers, promises, tears, I spared nothing. It was in one of those tender moments that a pretty woman knows how to inspire that I caught my gosling, and that I ranged him on my side. . . . Become my titulary lover, he never ceases to pay assiduous court to me, and he kisses me night and morning, which attaches him to me all the more.

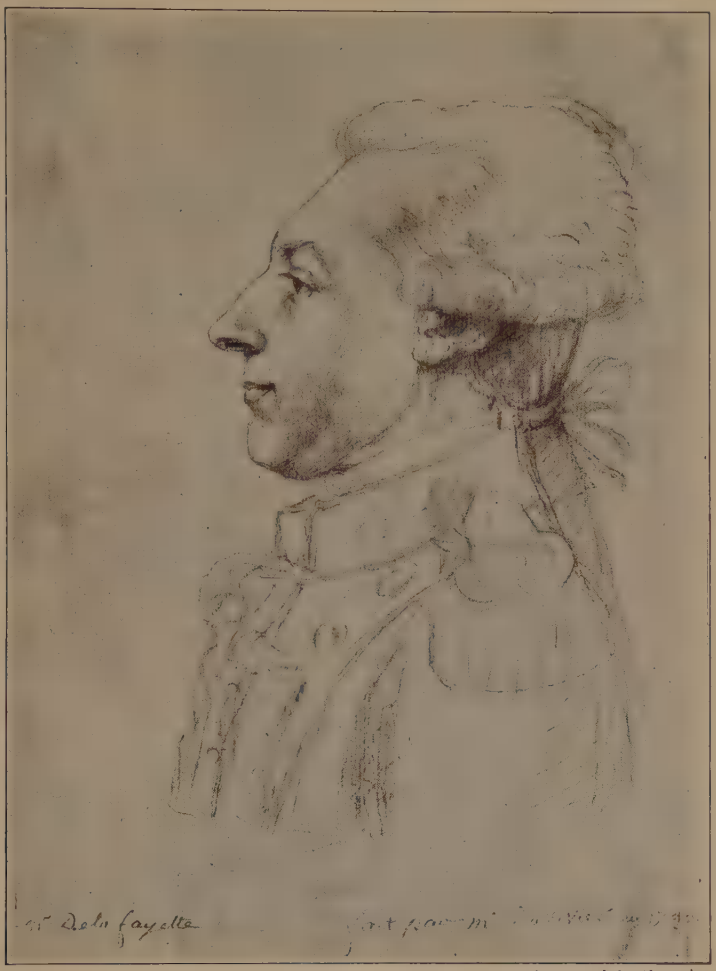
Many of these vile libels were invented by the Orléanists, and in the autumn of this year, 1790, Madame de La Motte, famous in the affair of the diamond necklace, returned to Paris and was set up in a handsome *hôtel* in the Place Vendôme by the Duke d'Orléans in return for more libels on the Queen.

And now another event enlarged the breach in his popularity. Charles Lameth and the Duke de Castries, son of the Marshal de Castries, the old friend and patron of La Fayette, fought a duel and Lameth was wounded. The friends of Lameth made the absurd charge that Castries had fought with a poisoned sword, and the gang of ruffians organized by the Lameths and known as the *Sabbat,* pillaged the *hôtel* of Castries. Led by Cavalanti, Rotondo and Giles, professional assassins imported from Italy, they escaladed the garden wall, burst into the house and were about to set fire to it when La Fayette, at the head of a detachment, arrived and drove them out. Then, of course, more cries of *"à bas La Fayette,"* and even demands for his head from the Jacobin demagogues.

The affair of Nancy would not down, and when it came up in the Assembly for discussion, even Noailles, who had joined the Orléans party, criticized him and charged him with having exceeded his powers. Mirabeau thundered from the tribune of the Jacobins, and La Fayette was accused of a new crime, that of having absented himself from the meetings of this society, which, setting itself up as an extra-legal and irresponsible agency—a phenomenon not unknown in democracies—was beginning to exercise a tyranny over the constituted authorities.

And then, on Christmas Day, the son of the Marquis de Bouillé arrived in Paris, charged by his father with a secret mission, and came to call in the rue de Bourbon. La Fayette received him with that rather confiding candour which was as natural to him as his hospitality, asked after his father and talked openly and freely with him about everything, including the King and Queen. The King was a good fellow, but without character or backbone, whilst the Queen, "unchanged by events, was alienating the heart of the Parisians by her haughty demeanour and an ill humour that she did not know how to hide."

Young Bouillé trotted off immediately to the Tuileries and reported all this to the King and Queen. They instructed him what to say, and how to act, and when he had his lesson pat, sent him back to his cousin. There the young fellow urged La Fayette to abandon the popular cause, and held up to him the great glory, the honours and rewards, that would be his if he were to save the monarch and the monarchy. But he replied that he had no ambition other than the public good, he wanted to see a free constitution adopted, and asked no reward other than the esteem of his fellow citizens; once his task was accomplished, he would retire to country life. Young Bouillé re-



Photograph by Giraudon

THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE

FROM A SKETCH BY DUVIVIER NOW IN THE LOUVRE.

ported that his cousin was a hopeless case and went back to Metz.

Then Mirabeau, who was not exactly a soldier, succeeded in getting himself named chief of the battalion of the Grange-Batelière, because, as he reported in his forty-ninth note to the King, "I see in that place a very sure and a very innocent means of learning the projects of the National Guard. . . . If M. de La Fayette had only commanders such as I, the Parisian army would not be without a general, but such a general would soon be without an army."

These were not the only ambushes laid for him; the Orléanists did not hesitate to seek his life. On February 28, 1791, they tried to throw all Paris in confusion by luring him out of the city—to come back no more. Under the pretext of destroying the donjon at Vincennes, long fallen into disuse, but still a relic of the old régime almost as hateful in Parisian eyes as the Bastille itself, they excited a riot. La Fayette, indeed, not long before had suggested to the King that if, on one of his rides on horseback he were to pass that way and order the demolition of the tower, it would add greatly to his popularity. But as Commanding General of the National Guard he could not allow it to be destroyed by rioters, and when he heard that a mob had gone to tear it down, he galloped at the head of his Grenadiers to Vincennes. He found the mob at its congenial work of destruction, and Santerre, who with his battalion had gone there on the pretext of restoring order, lending a willing hand. He ordered Santerre's men back into the ranks, and succeeded in arresting sixty men. The mob tried to free them, and there was a brisk skirmish. At evening he rode back with his prisoners, to find the gates of the faubourg Saint-Antoine closed against him, and they were unlocked only when he threatened to batter them down with

cannon. As he rode through the turbulent rue Saint-Antoine in the darkness, several shots were fired at him, and the rumour spread through Paris that he had been killed. He locked his prisoners in the Conciergerie, and thought that, having put down a riot of the riff-raff and rabble, his day was done; but he was summoned to the Tuileries by a riot among the nobles. He found the palace in commotion. That day, under the guise of giving a fête to the National Guards on duty there, the royalists had plied them with drink; then the First Gentlemen of the Bedchamber distributed tickets of admission to friends who, armed with swords, pistols and daggers, slipped into the apartments that separated the hall of the Guards from the chamber of the King. The King came out to receive these exalted partisans, and one of them, the hot-headed Chevalier de Saint-Elme, opened the door into the hall of the guards, and brandished a pistol. He had chosen an inauspicious moment for his bravado; the Guards had just heard the rumour that their General had been killed on his way back from Vincennes, and with blows and curses they chased the gentlemen out of the palace. They were nearly all gone when La Fayette arrived; he first gave the Duke de Villequier, First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, a sound rating and then went to express to the King his regrets for this aristocratic riot. The poor, tormented Louis shook his head sadly and said:

"The false zeal of people who call themselves my friends will be the loss of me in the end."

Quantities of weapons hidden in the King's apartments were collected in hampers and among them there were found a large number of poignards; after that they called the royalists "the Knights of the Dagger."

La Fayette issued an order of the day in which he treated

with great severity "the chiefs of the domestic service" and this expression, referring to the First Gentlemen of the Bedchamber as though they were menials, made the Duke de Villequier and the Marquis de Duras furious. The thing got into the gazettes and the King wrote to the General to ask him to deny it. He could do no more than disavow knowledge of the sources of the offending article, but his letter did not mollify the Court, since it concluded: "Besides, if my conduct in the course of that day has been of any utility, I gladly abandon to my enemies the consolation of criticizing some details of it."

The incident brought on a coolness between him and the King, and thus, with the King offended, the party at Court indignant and the Jacobins furious with him for his severity with the mob at Vincennes, the blows were falling thick upon him.

Then, on Saturday, April 2, 1791, he received a tremendous piece of news—Mirabeau had died that morning. A week before he had been in his place in the Assembly. And now—he was dead; their long rivalry was over. Paris was stunned; the theatres were closed, the Commune went into mourning; in the Assembly, Barnave, generous to an old enemy, moved that Mirabeau receive the honours shown by the nation to the great men who had served it well, and La Rochefoucauld proposed that the Church of Saint-Geneviève, recently constructed, "be transformed into a place of sepulchre for the great in order that the temple of religion may become the temple of the fatherland, and that the tomb of a great man may become the altar of liberty."

Thus, the first to lie in the Panthéon, he was buried there on Monday, April 4, with magnificent pomp. La Fayette, with his staff, at the head of the National Guard, rode down the Chaussée d'Antin to the Church of Saint-Eustache

and from there to the Church of Sainte-Geneviève. All that remained of authority of Paris was represented; the Assembly and the Commune attended in a body. The people were massed in the streets, they hung out of windows and swarmed on roofs, looking on silently as the *cortège* passed, the coffin borne on the shoulders of twelve sergeants of the battalion of the Grange-Batelière. Three hundred thousand people assisted at the funeral, and when twilight fell, the sombre procession was still moving slowly by, its muffled drums rolling lugubriously in the dusk, and long after night itself had folded in, the melancholy strains of funeral marches were still sounding through the city whose people for once were silent.

XIV

The approach of Easter, 1791, found the factions on the verge of a holy war. The Assembly had established a national church, the priests of which, while Roman Catholic, were nominated by the government and required to take an oath to support the Constitution. La Fayette had opposed these measures; he was in favour of entire religious liberty, and urged them to adopt "the American principle of perfect equality among the cults," but they, like most people, even La Fayette's ideal Americans, preferred anything to tolerance, and the debate was waged with all that malignant bitterness which only religious quarrels can excite. Adherence to the cult of the sworn priests became the very touchstone of patriotism. Of all the tribulations with which the spirit of intrigue and faction had sown his career, none had ever been quite so bad as this, and what made it all the more difficult for him was the fact that those two pious and determined women in his own household, his wife and his

mother-in-law, were among the staunchest supporters of the non-conformist cause. When the *curé* of Saint-Sulpice, Madame de La Fayette's own parish, resolved to resist the constitution, she made it a point to be present at the service in which he announced his refusal to take the oath, and she assiduously attended those churches where the persecuted priests said mass. The house in the rue de Bourbon was filled with priests and nuns who sought her protection, and she encouraged them to stand for the liberty of their cult. It pained her to think that she was injuring her husband's popularity, but when it was a question of conscience the daughters of the Duchess d'Ayen were immovable rocks of granite.

Constitutional ecclesiastics, of course, were often among their guests, and she received them with her accustomed graciousness, and assured them of her attachment to the cause of the former bishops in a way so charming that they were never offended. Only once did she break her rule of welcoming with the same hospitality all kinds of people, and that was when the General invited the Bishop of Paris, newly installed under the Constitution, to dine. He did not come merely as an individual, as the other bishops had come; he came, as it were, officially, the constitutional Bishop of Paris dining with the Commanding General of the National Guard. And there the Marquise drew the line; she would not receive him as one of his diocesans. That evening she went home to dine with her mother in the rue Saint-Honoré, and her absence from the long dinner-table in the *hôtel* de La Fayette in the rue de Bourbon was much remarked.

But his house was Liberty Hall and he did not oppose her, or criticize her conduct. As he wrote long afterwards, "if on other occasions, negligences, errors and feebleness

might be attributed to him, it was not in the cause of the liberty of cults that such a reproach would be applicable." He was "always persuaded that no power on earth could place itself between the heart of man and divinity," and he "detested all intolerance, that of unbelief, as well as that of any religious opinion whatsoever."

And so he did quite as much as his wife, except to go to mass, to uphold the right of Roman Catholics to worship as they pleased. He dispersed a mob that invaded the church of the Théatins, and time and again under the protection of his bayonets, mass was said or vespers sung by priests who refused to take the oath. Marat ridiculed him as the "grenadier of the battalion of the Théatins," and he was accused of having sold himself to Rome—he who was as staunch a deist as any of the bishops.

You will not receive a letter to-day [he wrote to Madame de Simiane], and I am very sorry. But when one has become the *procureur syndic* of all the religions on the earth, and it is necessary to accommodate and reconcile the fervour of all my family with the *ifs* and the *buts* of the administrative bodies, and of the ecclesiastical committee, one may get home later than one counted on. For two days I have passed my life in discussions and arrangements relating to the full and immediate exercise of religious liberty. . . . The King does everything he can to make himself unpopular; but he has the right to practise whatever cult he pleases and we will defend him on that point.

Louis XVI, not wishing to communicate in his constitutional parish, decided to go to Saint-Cloud and make his Easter there. On Easter Monday, he and the Queen set forth and drove out into the Carrousel only to find the mob punctually on hand. Danton, in the pay of the Duke d'Orléans, as well as that of the King, arrived at the head

of his battalion; Laclos, the Duke's right-hand man, disguised as a jockey, Sillery, the cuckold husband of Madame de Genlis, disguised as a postman, and of course the bloodthirsty St. Huruge and the *sabbat* of the Lameths, with Rotondo leading the rabble—they were all there, though Danton issued his commands from a safe distance. The mob stopped the royal coach and would not allow it to advance.

And then La Fayette arrived, spurred his way into the crowd, shouting his commands in the confident and imperative tone of one used to obedience. But for once, the National Guard refused to obey. He rode up to the King's carriage and asked Their Majesties to deign to be patient for a moment. The battalion of the Carmelites, in good order and loyal to him, was in the grand alley of the Tuileries, and he ordered it to open a passage and cover the departure of the King. But while he was bringing them up, the King and Queen slipped back into the palace. He returned to find them gone, and the mob triumphant. He waited upon the King in the palace, and urged him to persist in going to Saint-Cloud; he would insure his safety. The King thanked him and asked for time to think it over, but that evening the King told him with many thanks, that he had consulted his confessor who had said "that it would suffice, for the salvation of his soul, merely to refrain from making his Easter at a church that had complied with the new decree."

La Fayette was sick with disgust; the National Guard had disobeyed him; the King had refused to do the only thing that could have repaired the wrong of that day. He felt himself alone, abandoned, and so once more he wrote out his resignation as commanding general, and worn out by the long strain, he went to the Hôtel de Ville, pre-

sented it to the Commune, made a speech giving his reasons and fell down in a swoon.

The provincial calm of the rue de Bourbon was broken the next day by a gathering of the battalions, come to implore him to remain at their head. The officers crowded into the house, but to escape their importunities La Fayette had gone from home. The plucky little Marquise, in "transports of joy" at his resignation, received them in his absence, and assured them that it was no use; deeply as he was touched by so many flattering proofs of their devotion, M. de La Fayette could not reconsider his determination. That evening a detachment of the Guards, bearing torches, marched to the Hôtel de Ville, and begged the Commune to join them in their representations. Bailly, at the head of the municipal council, accompanied them to the rue de Bourbon; the street, the courtyard in front, the garden behind, the house itself, were all crowded with the Guards; Bailly, worried and full of care, remained until after midnight, but La Fayette would not listen.

The next day delegates of the sixty battalions met and resolved that every citizen-soldier would "swear on his honour and sign a pledge to obey the law; that those who refused to do so would be excluded from the National Guard; that certain individuals who so shamefully had outraged the royal family should be punished and driven from the National Guard."

"Mon Général," said one of them, as they presented this pledge, "you need fear nothing; we take the attitude of free men; we get down on our knees before the statue of liberty."

He could not resist, and the satisfaction of the Marquise in seeing him retire to private life lasted only four days. He resumed his command, and she "the painful career of her anxieties."

After the riot of Easter Monday, there was order in the city for a while. The National Guards, like contrite children, were on their good behaviour. The Parisians were reassured now that La Fayette and Jean Leblanc were there to ride among them again, and in those spring days they strolled on the terraces of the Tuileries or under the trees in the gardens of the Feuillants and the Capucins, just coming into leaf, or sat at the small tables before the cafés of the Manège, refreshed themselves with syrupy drinks and the gossip of the town and took the air of Paris. They read the latest libels on La Fayette in Marat's *Friend of the People* and the attacks by Camille Desmoulins, but they were not deeply impressed. The National Assembly, after more than twenty months at the task, had almost exhausted all the metaphysical subtleties, and it was felt that before long it could bring its labours to an end and give France a Constitution.

He had time to write long letters to Washington, who was deeply concerned for his friend's safety. The old Commander-in-Chief did not like mobs and street fighting; "the turbulent populace of great cities is always to be dreaded," and all of the Marquis's old American friends—Knox, Jay, Hamilton and Jefferson—"often show by their anxiety for your safety, how much they love you."

He longed to see them all, and to see America again. He was weary and at times disheartened. Many of his friends did not approve a course that was so opposed to the interests and views of his own class. Even Madame de Simiane was critical.

"I can not tell you," he wrote to her, "how much your letter afflicts me . . . a revolution that I so much longed for; that my efforts have in part brought about, makes every one I love unhappy. I am devoted to it to my last

breath, but the charm that it had for me is poisoned by the effect it produces on all those who are dearest to my heart."

XV

Of all the charges against him none annoyed him more than that he was keeping the King a prisoner in the Tuileries. As a matter of fact, the King, the Queen and the Princesses went out as they pleased, in carriages or on horseback, and, until the riot of Easter Monday, had gone to Saint-Cloud as they had always done. Any one desiring to pay court to the King was admitted. But the radical Jacobins were always predicting that the King would run away, and their gazettes were forever exposing plots for his escape, and these rumours frightened the people, who seemed to dread the disappearance of the King as the worst calamity that could befall them. However, the General took precautions; Gouvion was personally in command at the palace, and he could trust him, though he felt a delicacy in subjecting the King to surveillance, and was humiliated by the necessity of taking any precautions at all.

After the events of Easter Monday, it was again rumoured that the King was contemplating flight; members of the Assembly and the Commune were worried, and to quiet their fears La Fayette, one day, frankly told the King of the stories that were going round. Louis XVI gave him such solemn assurances, and so readily pledged his word that he would do no such thing, that La Fayette was ashamed of having broached the subject, and whenever it came up at the Manège or at the Hôtel de Ville, said that he would answer for the King on his own head.

On the evening of June 20, before going home, he dropped in to see Bailly for a moment, and whilst he was there the

Mayor said that he had just received a "warning" that the King intended to fly; Bailly thought that it was nothing but an idle rumour; they had received such "warnings" so often. Nevertheless, La Fayette said that on his way home he would stop at the Tuileries and speak to Gouvion. He entered his coach and drove to the *hôtel* de Noailles in the rue Saint-Honoré, where he sat a while talking with the Duchess d'Ayen and the members of the family, and then, at a quarter past eleven o'clock he left and, escorted by his torch-bearers, drove to the Tuileries. At the corner of the rue de l'Échelle stood a small, old-fashioned diligence, drawn by three horses, a coachman on the box, but that was no uncommon sight and La Fayette drove on.

He reached the palace just in time for the *coucher du roi,* and as it was an opportunity to pay his court he went into the *chambre de parade,* next to the King's bedroom. The room was filled, as usual, with courtiers, hanging on the King's every word, with those lowered eyes and that ingratiating, inane smile which always disgusted La Fayette.

The King was rather dull and heavy that evening, and somewhat preoccupied; he went several times to the window to see what the weather was; the sky was cloudy, and the night was dark. However, after he had talked a while and looked out of the window again, he retired within the balustrade about his great bed, and said his prayers, while everybody kept silence. There he took off his coat, let his breeches fall and coming out seated himself in a large armchair and held up one foot to a valet kneeling at his right, and then the other to a valet kneeling on his left, and they, taking each one a royal foot, drew off his boots. It was the signal to retire.

"Passez, Messieurs," said the usher, bowing. They went out.

La Fayette sent for Gouvion and told him of the new rumours. Gouvion was the lover of Madame Rochereuil, one of the Queen's ladies' maids; she kept him informed of what was going on, but she had not mentioned such a thing as flight. However, he told Gouvion to order the officers of the Guard to take a turn now and then in the courts that night—just to be sure. Then with Gouvion he made the round of all the posts. Everything was in order; he bade his old friend and comrade in the American war good-night. He went out into the brightly lighted Cour des Princes where the long file of waiting carriages stood; men and women who had been at the *couchers* of the King and of the Queen were coming from the palace; an usher was calling out names as the carriages advanced. Coachmen, footmen and link-boys were chatting; National Guards were sauntering up and down taking the air, talking loudly, with great guffaws of laughter now and then. At sight of their tall General they saluted. He returned their salutes, an easy, almost companionable gesture, got into his coach, and with his torch-bearers running along before, drove away. As his coach lurched out of the Carrousel and turned towards the quay, it passed, so close that she could have touched its wheels, a woman in a black mantle and heavy veil. He sank back on the cushions of his coach and drove home to the rue de Bourbon.

XVI

At eight o'clock the next morning he was roused out of a sound sleep to find his friend André, deputy for Aix, standing by his bedside, with a white, scared face.

"The King has gone!" gasped André.

La Fayette leapt out of bed, hurriedly got into his uni-

form and rushed downstairs to find his house in commotion; officers were dashing in, asking for orders, followed by strange intruders, curious to know how the General would take the stupendous news. He appeared before them again, his face a mask, perhaps a little pale. He buckled on his sword, clapped his large cocked hat on his head and calling his young aide-de-camp, Louis Romeuf, went out into the street. The rue de Bourbon was filled with an excited and angry crowd. The wicket doors in the great double portals were cautiously ajar, and *concierges* peeped out timidly to see what was the matter. At the sight of the tall, tightly buttoned figure of the General, with his heavy American epaulettes, the crowd began to shake its multitudinous fists and to shout at him:

"Traitor! Traitor!"

Many epithets had been flung at him in the course of that Revolution, but never that one. He set his face and strode along, erect and haughty, his large bicorne hat, cocked at a jauntier angle than usual on his reddish, unpowdered hair tossing disdainfully above the heads of the menacing crowd. At the corner of the rue du Bac he saw Bailly, followed by a curious crowd; the tall, thin form in the long black coat was bent, almost broken down, with care; the sensitive face, the face of a scholar, was drawn and troubled. They met, the harassed Mayor with anxious inquiries on his lips, the General, stiffly erect, slightly self-conscious, hiding his own anxiety behind a faintly ironical smile. In a moment they were joined by a third man, also on his way to the rue de Bourbon, the Viscount Alexandre de Beauharnais, president of the National Assembly. The four men hurried on, impatiently pushing their way through the crowd, crossed the Pont Royal to the quay and so to the Place du Carrousel.

The atmosphere was heavy and humid; thunder-storms were in the air; great masses of clouds piled up in the west and moved majestically over the grey mansards of the Tuileries and the Louvre. The Place was packed with wild, dishevelled people, thousands of them, roused by the clang of the tocsin, and at sight of La Fayette they broke into an angry clamour. At the headquarters of the Guard he found Gouvion, red with embarrassment and chagrin, overwhelmed by his responsibility and nearly beside himself with worry. He swore that it could not be true; he himself had remained there for hours; the royal family simply could not have escaped their vigilance without some sort of sorcery or legerdemain. No one could account for it. All they knew was that, when the valets had gone to the royal apartments that morning, the King was not there. He and the Queen, the Dauphin, Madame Royale and Madame Elisabeth all had gone. The royal family had vanished. The army of servants in the great palace—two thousand of them—was in panic, and the vast and complicated machine suddenly stopped.

But what was to be done? The crowd was already howling its execrations against the King who had deserted them, and crying out vengeance against La Fayette who had allowed him to get away. The moments were precious; soon some one would exploit the situation. Poor Bailly, at his wit's end, shook his head in despair.

"Do you think," said La Fayette, "that the arrest of the King and his family is necessary to the public safety?"

Beauharnais and Bailly both thought that it was, "but," said Beauharnais, who had legalistic scruples, "by what right may any one arrest him? Where is the power? Who will give the order?"

"I will take the responsibility," said La Fayette, with a smile that restored their confidence.

"Here, Romeuf." And he dictated an order—dictated it in one breath, without having to change a word:

"The enemies of the Revolultion having carried off the King, the bearer is charged to inform all good citizens:—that they are enjoined in the name of the nation in danger to seize him from their hands and to bring him back to the bosom of the National Assembly. It is about to meet, but meanwhile, I take on myself all the responsibility of the present order."

He had been perfectly aware from the first moment that morning of the peril he was in; he knew that his reputation, his career, his very life were at stake. He realized fully the risk he was running now in laying hands on the head of the State. And yet, seizing a quill, he signed his name with an offhand flourish, as though he were merely performing some routine, perfunctory act, instead of executing deliberately a veritable *coup d'état* that made him dictator and master of the realm, the only authority left in France.

Some one objected that the Queen and the Dauphin were not mentioned in the order, and he added the words:

"This order extends to all the royal family."

He gave it to Louis Romeuf and told him to take the road for Laon and Mons, for by that route, they all thought, the King would try to reach the frontier, fifty leagues away. Others volunteered to take other roads, and copies of the order were given them.

The crowd had invaded the Tuileries and was trooping through the magnificent apartments of gilt and crystal. They blamed Veto for having run away, sighed sentimentally in the chamber of the Dauphin, and in the apartments

of the Queen the hatred of *l'Autrichienne* broke forth, and they rummaged through her closets, inspected her most private and personal possessions, tumbled out her wardrobes, tried on her clothes.

La Fayette told Gouvion to clear them out of the palace, using patience and tact, had his horse brought round and set out alone for the Hôtel de Ville, riding through the surly crowds with a dashing and confident air, a certain swaggering indifference to danger. Arriving at the Place de Grève, he found a larger crowd, swirling around some tragic commotion at its centre; he rode up and recognized the victim as the Duke d'Aumont, commander of a division of the National Guard that had been on duty at the Tuileries the night before. The mob had torn his clothes from his body and were hustling him towards the river, when the General ordered them to release him. They obeyed instantly, and forgetting poor d'Aumont, surrounded La Fayette, not crying out against him now, but applauding him and caressing the white flanks of Jean Leblanc. Chaffing the crowd that pressed about him, he rode up to the perron of the Hôtel de Ville, dismounted, gave his bridle-rein to an orderly, calmly ascended the stone steps and turned to face them. From the crowd rose a murmur of reproach; many were in tears and cried with a kind of inconsolable lamentation:

"The King is gone!"

He smiled indulgently an instant, and then said:

"Well, my children, what are you complaining of? Louis XVI had a civil list of twenty-five millions, and by its suppression each citizen to-day saves twenty sous."

"Bravo!" they cried. "No more kings for us!"

Enjoying his power over them and pleased that the tide had turned and was now floating him off the reef, he stood there, nonchalantly tapping his boot with a riding-whip.

"If you call that flight a misfortune," he said, "I should like to know what name you would give to a counter-revolution that would deprive you of all liberty!"

They cheered. He stood there an instant longer, a striking silhouette against the façade of the Hôtel de Ville; then waving them a friendly salute, he went into the Hôtel de Ville, the old gratifying shout of *"Vive La Fayette!"* ringing in his ears.

The clock in the Hôtel de Ville struck ten; a gun boomed, once, twice, three times; it was the battery posted on the Pont-Neuf to be used as a signal of alarm. Then, through the streets, the roll of drums that sent a shudder through Paris, already in the grip of that fear which was responsible for so many of the horrors of the Revolution. The people thought that the flight of Veto was but the preliminary to more serious events; word flew from mouth to mouth that the royalists were about to take their revenge on the people in a sanguinary counter-revolution.

The populace was not alone in its rage and fear. The King had not informed the royalists in the Assembly, had not even told Montmorin of his intention. He had left them in the lurch, exposed to the reprisals of the mob; indeed he and the Queen had expected that the first result of their flight would be the assassination of La Fayette; Cousin Bouillé, who was deep in the plot, was sure this would be the case.

But the day wore on and nothing happened. A deputation from the Assembly arrived to summon La Fayette; the Assembly had heard that he was in danger from the mob, and its emissaries asked him to order an escort to protect them on their return.

"I shall order one out of respect for the deputation," he replied, "but as for me, I will go by myself, having never

been so much in safety since the streets are full of people."

When he reached the Manège, the crowd on the terraces gazing disconsolately at the low, drab façade of the old riding-school, looked at him curiously, and kept silent.

He entered the long, dim hall; strode down the long gangway between the rows of green benches, and at sight of the tall figure in uniform Camus leapt to his feet and shouted:

"No uniforms here! Uniforms and arms must not be seen in the Assembly!"

Several members of the Left sprang up excitedly and shouted:

"Get out of the hall!"

But Beauharnais, from his high estrade, reminded them that the Assembly itself had summoned General de La Fayette to its bar. He climbed up into the tribune and said that Gouvion, who had been in command of the palace, was ready to make a statement to the Assembly. Gouvion, still red and embarrassed, came to the bar and told what had happened. The Assembly listened in silence and perplexity.

Deputy Regnaud, a Herculean lawyer from Saint-Jean-d'-Angély proposed to dispatch couriers in all directions with orders to arrest anyone attempting to leave the realm. Beauharnais said that La Fayette had already sent couriers out on all the roads, and at this announcement democratic suspicions were at once aroused. What right had La Fayette to give such orders? He was not a legal authority; the executive power alone was qualified. Yes, but the executive power had run away. And so they debated, turning round and round in the vicious circle of this constitutional argument. Nevertheless they voted such a decree, and then began to debate another question: who should carry it? They argued, quibbled like pettifoggers—the Assembly was

full of young lawyers—in that hot, stuffy atmosphere. Then suddenly, in the uproar, a message was handed up to the President. He rose, announced that one of the aides-de-camp of La Fayette wished to be heard, and Louis Romeuf stepped up to the bar.

He was out of breath, dusty, dishevelled, but he told how, bearing the order of his General, he had left the *hôtel* of La Fayette with a comrade, Curmer, to take the road to Mons, when, at the bridge Louis XVI, then in construction, he was set on by the workmen, dragged from his horse, beaten and hustled to the post of the Guard in the Feuillants. Then Beauharnais had a happy thought; here was Romeuf, and the Assembly was seeking a courier; why not send him?

"Oui! Oui!" cried the deputies. And Romeuf suddenly became a hero; deputies surrounded him, congratulated him, slapped him on the back. A copy of the decree was given to him, and to insure against further adventures like that at the bridge Louis XVI, La Tour-Maubourg and Biauzat, with a serjeant-at-arms, were detailed to escort him to the barrier of Saint-Denis.

They declared themselves in permanent session, and made a pretence of stoicism almost Roman by continuing their discussions as though nothing had happened. But Paris was astonishingly calm. The fears of the morning, now, since nothing had happened, had given way to raillery. Gangs ranged through the city tearing down royal emblems and destroying the portraits of the King and Queen in the shops; they forced a hatter whose name was Louis to erase his own name from his own sign, but that was all.

Evening came, and the Assembly still sat in permanence, growing rather weary of this austere and exacting rôle. La Fayette appeared again at the bar with Rochambeau and a

number of other officers. Rochambeau was about to assume command of the army of the North and was in full uniform, his hair curled and powdered; he had come to take the oath of fidelity and obedience. Then everybody wished to take the oath again, as men ready to set an example and be inoculated, no matter how many times, and they stood at the bar in the candlelight, raised their hands and repeated dramatically:

"Je le jure!"

Charles Lameth proposed an even more drastic form of oath, to be sworn by all officers because, he declared solemnly:

"In twenty-four hours the whole realm may be on fire; we may have the enemy on our hands."

A patriotic thrill ran through the Assembly; the deputies all stood up, gave way to their emotions; chivalrous sentiments were expressed, every one congratulated every one else; in fact, it was all very moving and very French.

When La Fayette left the Manège he went to the old convent of the Jacobins in the rue Saint-Honoré where the Society of Friends of the Constitution, to give the Jacobins their pretentious name, were holding a meeting that evening. He had heard that Robespierre and Danton were to make incendiary motions and as he had not attended a meeting for a long time—and had been criticized for not doing so—he decided to go. Barnave, Siéyès, Alexandre Lameth and many members of the Left went also, and when La Fayette entered the crowded and suffocating chapel he was greeted with a howl of hatred. Danton had just come down from the tribune, where he had been virtuously denouncing traitors; and seeing the General he mounted the tribune again, and shaking his enormous head, began to thunder against La Fayette as the chief of them.

"And you, Monsieur La Fayette," he roared, studiously omitting the aristocratic particle, "who only recently agreed to answer for the person of the King with your own head, you dare to appear in this assembly without having paid your debt? You swore that the King would not go away. Either you have delivered over your country, or you were stupid in having answered for a person for whom you could not be responsible. . . ."

La Fayette, in the midst of that wild assembly, looked at him in amazement. For he knew that Montmorin, on behalf of the King, had paid Danton ninety thousand *livres* to buy him off; he had encountered Danton at Montmorin's the day the bargain was made; Danton had even spoken to him about it, and tried to justify himself, saying: "General, I am more of a monarchist than you are." But Danton knew that he could rely on La Fayette's almost quixotic sense of chivalry not to betray him—and so he thundered on. When he had done La Fayette took his place in the tribune and without so much as noticing Danton he said, in his contemptuous way:

"I come once more to unite with this society, because all good citizens should be found in its midst in these circumstances in which more than ever we must struggle for liberty, and every one knows that I was the first to say that when a people wished to be free, it became so; and I have never been so sure of liberty as I am since I have enjoyed the spectacle that the capital has offered this day."

And then he left the hall, and went out into the brightly lighted streets; the crowds were coming from the Opéra and from the Théâtre de la Nation, as gay as though it were a Sunday evening in normal times, laughing and chatting in the warm summer night; they went home, and the

city was as silent and peaceful as though Louis XVI were snug in his bed at the Tuileries.

Wednesday came, but no news. The Assembly discussed a thrilling report of the Committee on Agriculture. Then the morning tide of rumours began to come in; the King was at Aulnai; the King was at Metz; the King had been arrested at Lille; the Count d'Artois, with forty thousand men, was about to cross the frontier. The session dragged on; Beauharnais was exhausted; Dauchy took the chair; Dauchy gave out and Chabroud relieved him. At ten o'clock that night they all gave up and suspended the session; Cato himself could have held out no longer. They rushed out of doors, under the awnings of the restaurants before the Manège and in the Feuillants, eagerly breathing the fresh air.

Then, suddenly, a confused sound of excited voices, a rumour grown audible, swelling into a cry:

"The King is taken!'

And all the deputies rushed back into the stifling hall, clambered over the benches into their places. Chabroud climbed up to the President's chair; at the foot of the estrade was a scuffling mass of men, and in the midst of them two couriers, dusty as millers, even their eyelashes white, their red faces streaked with sweat. A little irritated at being jostled by this hot, impatient crowd, they struggled to the secretary's table and handed up their dispatches. The deputies leant forward in concentrated attention. . . .

The King had been arrested at Varennes. But where was Varennes? Nobody had ever heard of the place before. A provincial deputy said that it was in Argonne, not far from Verdun, about ten leagues from the frontier. Bouillé with his troops was at Clermont-en-Argonne, held back only by the local National Guards; civil war was at hand. . . .

The entire Assembly was on its feet, deputies were screaming, proposing all sorts of measures for great emergencies.

"Close the barriers! Declare a state of siege! Remove Bouillé from his command!"

Chabroud, in the noise and excitement, left the chair; André took his place and declared the séance suspended; no one could think in such a bedlam, and they must decide what to do. La Fayette, La Tour-Maubourg, Barnave and the other leaders consulted, and agreed that they must send commissioners to bring back the King. At midnight the deputies reassembled, calmer now, almost silent. Toulongeon spoke: "We are at what is perhaps the most painful and the most solemn moment that history has ever consecrated in the annals of a nation!"

And it was instantly voted to take pressing measures to protect the person of the King, the heir apparent and other members of the royal family, "and that for the execution of these dispositions Messieurs La Tour-Maubourg, Pétion, and Barnave should go to Varennes, as commissioners of the Assembly, accompanied by Matthieu Dumas, adjutant general."

La Fayette went home with La Tour-Maubourg, at whose house in the rue Saint-Dominique the commissioners were to meet. Matthieu Dumas came, and Duport; then Tracy, deputy for Moulins. At half-past two in the morning—Thursday now—Pétion arrived. They sat and talked of the extraordinary situation. What was to be done with the King? Could he continue to reign after this? Could a Council of State be given to him? Pétion, a corpulent and vulgar *bourgeois* of radical opinions, already by his demagogy acquiring a popularity, declared that "the fat pig was very embarrassing." The expression was rather strong for

the aristocratic taste of La Tour-Marbourg and La Fayette, but they were inclined to agree. Barnave did not arrive until four o'clock; it was broad daylight, and the commissioners set out in a berline with two ushers on the box, and postilions galloping before.

Friday came, a day of leaden skies and suffocating thundery heat, and with it Louis Romeuf, back from Varennes. And from him La Fayette, at last, could get the news every one was burning to hear. He had left Paris on Tuesday, and on the road had heard of a mysterious berline drawn by six horses, of a diligence drawn by three horses and of a young postilion who had led hired horses to the house of the Count de Fersen in the rue Millet; Romeuf knew of Fersen's devotion to the Queen, and had ridden in pursuit of the mysterious berline. He galloped on and reached Meaux at four o'clock, having ridden eleven leagues in two hours and a half; there, more news of the berline, and he galloped on in that awful heat, wearing out horses, from one post to the next. He had no heart in his mission; he had been on service at the Tuileries, had often seen the Queen, been remarked by her for his tact and bearing, and had fallen under the spell of her beauty and her charm. . . . La Fayette knew all this, and understood. . . . But he obeyed orders and galloped on—hoping that the King and Queen would have got away before he caught up. . . . At Chalons-sur-Marne he overtook Bayon, one of the volunteers who had set out in pursuit, and they requisitioned a cabriolet and drove on in the night.

They reached Clermont at half-past two in the morning. And there a courier came breathless from Varennes; the King, the Queen, the Dauphin were there, guarded by the populace—but Bouillé with his hussars was coming to rescue

them; there was sure to be a massacre. They rode on to Varennes.

At this point in his story Romeuf, worn out by his long ride, broke down and wept. . . . He controlled himself. . . . They had overtaken the King and the Queen at last in the mean house of Sauce the chandler; he and Bayon had had to perform their painful duty. Bayon had been brutal, but Romeuf had held back. . . . The Queen had cast on him out of her blue eyes one look of reproach.

"What, Monsieur—you?"

And Romeuf had burst into tears.

Little by little they pieced the story together; La Fayette asked about Fersen. Yes, Fersen, wearing a greatcoat and a coachman's hat, had driven the berline to Varennes, and then, when they were taken, escaped. And so it was Fersen whom he had seen sitting on the box of the diligence in the rue de l'Échelle that Monday night!

The King and the Queen with the royal children and their suite were to be brought back to Paris, and should arrive on Saturday evening. La Fayette sent his cavalry out as far as Bondy wood to meet them on their return. The day dawned with a sky of brass; the heat was terrific and the air of Paris charged with excitement. He shut off the boulevards and, in the afternoon, stationed troops along the Champs Elysées from the barrier of the Etoile to the Tuileries. Then, shortly after noon, with his staff, he cantered out along the road as far as Pantin. Sitting his horse in the farther edge of the village, looking down the long, white, chalky road, lined with black crowds of waiting people, there under the fiery sun, he saw a great cloud of dust. The cloud of dust advanced slowly, and presently, as it drew nearer, he could distinguish an escort of cavalrymen, their sabres glinting in the dust-laden air; then the

berline, lumbering along. It came on slowly, and with it a crowd that trailed out along the road and across the fields as far as he could see. The crowd pressed close upon the berline; men and boys perched on the swans'-necks of the springs behind, and stood on the heavy fenders and mud-guards; they were packed on the *impériale* like so much luggage, almost crowding the three bodyguards off the seat. And the berline lumbered slowly along through the dust and the heat, lurching from side to side, nearly toppled over by its load of patriots. Seen thus a way off, it was like some weary hunted animal, borne down, overwhelmed, by a swarm of vicious and deadly insects.

And thus Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette came back. They had been wedged into that berline ever since six o'clock that morning, the King and Queen on the rear seat, with Barnave squeezed between them, holding the Dauphin between his knees. Facing them were Madame Elisabeth, the King's sister, and Madame de Tourzel, the governess, with Madame Royale on her knees, the fat, sweating Pétion sitting between them. Pétion had never been in the presence of royalty before, and was greatly impressed at first, but he had grown accustomed, and finally familiar, and at his ease ate cold chicken, gnawed the bones and flung them out of the carriage window under the nose of the Queen. The silly fellow fancied that Madame Elisabeth, that pious devotee, had succumbed to his personal charms and fallen in love with him at first sight. When the King gave him a drink of orangeade, Pétion politely clinked his glass against the carafe in the best manner of the *buvettes* in the faubourg Saint-Marceau.

Barnave was embarrassed by his colleague, but helpless. La Tour-Maubourg had been offered a place in the second carriage, but had refused, not caring to ride with valets and

ladies' maids. He rode a post-horse, while Matthieu Dumas had appropriated a blooded horse that the Count de Bruges had left behind at Meaux. There was another carriage for the luggage, and a chariot containing a delegation of patriots from the town of Varennes, which that day had emerged from provincial obscurity to take its place in the history of France.

In the short halt at Pantin, La Fayette made his duties to Their Majesties; the Queen, her face stained with tears, somewhat astonished to find that La Fayette was still alive, was cold and formal. At the barrier of Monceau, the King, to brace himself for the ordeal of Paris, asked for a large glass of wine; it was brought to him from a café, and he tossed it off at a draught.

They drove down the Champs Elysées, between two ranks of National Guards, who stood with arms reversed, as at a funeral, holding back the silent crowd. They crossed the Place Louis XV, now one vast ocean of people who would not uncover. They drove into the garden of the Tuileries where, from the terrace of the Feuillants a crowd looked on —always in silence.

The berline reached the palace and stopped; and then, suddenly, the crowd surged forward, the human pack in full cry once more, clamoring for the blood, not of the King, nor of the Queen, but of the three unfortunate bodyguards in the buff liveries on the box.

"A mort!" the mob cried. *"Les gardes à mort!"*

They overwhelmed the National Guard, rushed up the steps of the broad perron that must be crossed before the door of the pavilion du Horloge could be reached; Matthieu Dumas rode into the mob; he lost his hat, his sash was stripped from his body, the scabbard of his sword was snatched away, and his uniform was torn. One of the

bodyguards tumbled from the seat; the mob fell upon him, and began to beat him.

"Monsieur de La Fayette!" cried the Queen, thrusting her head out of the window, "save the bodyguards!"

La Fayette was already rallying his troops; he reformed the ranks and forced back the crowd; the guards were got into the pavilion. And then, the deputation appointed by the National Assembly to receive the royal fugitives, appeared on the perron, first among them the Viscount de Noailles, accompanied by Dupont, Menou, Coroller, the Abbé Grégoire and Le Couteulx. The door of the berline was opened, and the King, hot and dishevelled, his fuzzy brown coat covered with dust, slowly descended, mounted the stone steps, crossed the perron. Not a word was spoken, not a hat removed. Then the Queen appeared and there was a murmur of curious interest; Noailles stepped forward, bowed gallantly, and escorted her to the pavilion.

Then came the Dauphin and his sister, the only ones to receive a cheer, and at last Madame Elisabeth and Madame de Tourzel. They were escorted into the palace by La Tour-Maubourg and Barnave. La Fayette and the deputies followed. The great iron grill of the peristyle was closed. It was seven o'clock; the long Calvary of the royal family had lasted thirteen hours.

Once more they were in their own apartments, with the valets and powdered footmen at their places as usual, just as though nothing had happened. They assembled in the Chambre de Parade; the King went to his room, made his toilette, glad of fresh linen, and returned, a little tired but quite unmoved, and rather relieved to be home again.

There was a moment of embarrassment. La Fayette was standing aside, in the respectful attitude he had learnt long before at Court in days when royalty actually reigned, his

great hat under his arm. The Queen glanced about the room, and he saw that her eyes were seeking him. They found him, and he could read in them now, not only all the old dislike, but an almost malignant hatred, as though he impersonated all those forces that had brought her down to what she had endured that day.

She came towards him and affecting a somewhat contemptuous air, handed him the keys of the coffrets containing her jewels, which she had left in the berline. He flushed at this wanton and so feminine insult, the feline scratch of a woman who had been tortured and wounded at the heart of her pride that day, then bowed, and declined the proffered keys.

"No one would think, Madame," he reminded her, "of opening Your Majesty's coffrets."

But the Queen, with a sneer, laid the keys on his hat.

"I beg the Queen to excuse me," he said, "for the trouble I cause in asking Your Majesty to take them back, for I can not touch them."

"Very well," exclaimed the Queen petulantly, snatching away the keys. "I shall find some one less delicate than you!"

When at last he was alone with the King, he said:

"Sire, Your Majesty was aware of my attachment for Your Majesty; but I never gave Your Majesty reason to doubt that, if Your Majesty separated his cause from that of the people, I should remain on the people's side."

"That is true," Louis XVI admitted, with an air of something like regret and sad resignation, "you have followed your principles; it is a matter of party." He paused, thought a moment and went on: "And now, here am I. I will say to you frankly that, until quite recently, I believed myself to be in a whirlwind of people of your opinion, with

whom you surrounded me, but that theirs was not the opinion of France. I have clearly realized, in this journey, that I was mistaken and that it was the general opinion."

The King relapsed into silence and for some moments was lost in sombre reflections. La Fayette stood before him, waiting for the signal to retire. He waited, but the King did not speak.

"Has Your Majesty any orders to give me?" he asked finally.

The King roused from his reverie and looked up; over his fat face there spread a faint, humorous smile.

"It seems to me," he said, "that I am more at your orders than you are at mine."

XVII

The flight to Varennes delivered the monarchy the heaviest blow it had yet received. The King was hardly back in the Tuileries before the republicans were ready to dethrone him, and the monarchists were wondering if they had not better seize the occasion to put some one else in his place. The Palais Royal saw a chance for the dissolute Duke, and Réal, at the Jacobin club, proposed that he be urged to accept the regency. The pamphleteers in Orléans's pay scattered through the town a fresh stock of brochures, calling the King *le gros cochon,* a besotted drunkard, and applying to him all the epithets in the rich vocabulary of blackguardism.

But La Fayette said that "Louis XVI, in spite of his recent mistakes, was the best prince of his family, and, taking him all in all, the best in Europe." It was this opinion that prevailed at a meeting held at the house of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, on the Sunday following the return of the

runaways. La Fayette, Lally-Tollendal, La Tour-Maubourg, Du Pont de Nemours and most of the leaders in the Assembly were there to deliberate whether the King should be accused and dethroned and the republic established. Many of them were in angry mood, and the discussion grew sharp and acrimonious. La Rochefoucauld was in favour of a republic, and so was Du Pont de Nemours. But La Fayette felt that the people were not ready for a change so radical. He got up and defined his position in a phrase: "If you kill the King, I warn you that the next day the National Guard and I will proclaim the Dauphin King."

There was no more discussion; they decided to support the constitutional monarchy. Young Barnave had been so deeply moved by the sufferings of the Queen during the journey back from Varennes, that he renounced his republican views and slammed out of the Jacobins with Adrien Duport, the Lameths, Noailles and others, to join La Fayette in a new club, rival to the Jacobins, called the Feuillants, after the monastery where it met. It supported King and Constitution, and on July 15, Barnave, in the Assembly, made one of the most eloquent speeches of his career in support of this policy. La Fayette moved the previous question, the urns were brought and the motion was carried almost unanimously.

A decree of the Assembly made him in reality the gaoler of the King, the Queen and the Dauphin, and the sticklers for legal precision, numerous in the Assembly, insisted on a strict and literal interpretation. But "when a rigorous measure is susceptible of two interpretations," he said, "I always take the one that is more humane."

And so the routine at the Tuileries went on much as it had always done; the military service was unchanged, except that now La Fayette gave the countersign for the

Guard, instead of asking the King for it. He detailed officers whom he knew to be most agreeable to the King, and made the situation as easy as he could for the royal prisoners.

Madame de La Fayette had never been so proud of him in her life. On the one hand she saw him renounce his republican inclinations, whilst on the other she saw him in his embarrassing position, assume all the responsibility and bear all the blame, in order to insure the safety of the royal family and spare them as much pain as possible. As soon as the Queen began to receive, she went to the Tuileries to make her duties to Her Majesty, because she thought that politics should not affect personal relations, though perhaps Marie Antoinette did not feel quite that way about it.

The Assembly was anxious to achieve the Constitution, and have done. The people were sick of the Revolution and glad to think that the worst was over, that peace and normal conditions were near at hand. But whilst the Assembly was now dominated by the constitutional democrats or "Fayettistes," the Orléans faction and the anarchist element, the Jacobins—Marat, Danton, and the men of that ilk, hand in glove with the Orléanists—were devising new ways of stirring up old troubles. Laclos, the Duke's chief fugleman, proposed a petition for the deposition of the King, "and his replacement by constitutional means." Thousands of signatures were obtained in the *faubourgs,* and when the petition was presented at the altar of the nation in the Champ de Mars at the celebrations of July 14, a vast crowd, rag, tag and bobtail, gathered for the ceremony. Two inoffensive old men, a lame soldier and a wig-maker, had hidden themselves under the altar, either to munch their morning roll, or, as La Fayette concluded, "out of an indecent curiosity," and when the crowd dis-

covered them, they dragged them forth, massacred them, cut off their heads, stuck them on pikes and singing the *"Ça ira,"* set out to visit the site of the Bastille. On receiving news of this disorder, La Fayette, at the head of a detachment of National Guards, rode to the Champ de Mars, and found the mob, led by the familiar leaders from the Palais Royal, barricaded behind overturned carts. As he rode up a shot whizzed past his head. Some of his men leapt over the barricade, seized the man who had come so near to killing their General and dragged forth Fournier l'Américain, a well-known cut-throat from the Island of Martinique, in the pay of the Duke d'Orléans. But La Fayette, indifferent to his own safety, told them to let him go. Then he harangued the crowd, and when they explained that they only wished to "be good," he left a force of Guards near by, and rode back to Paris.

The day passed in peace, but towards evening the National Assembly was informed of a plot to mob the Assembly and the Tuileries, and ordered Mayor Bailly to take steps, and, if necessary, to proclaim martial law. The Mayor sent three members of the council with a detachment of National Guards to the Champ de Mars to persuade the crowd to disperse; but the crowd pelted them with stones and began to riot in force. The disorder grew, and the Commune determined to display the red flag and to proclaim martial law. Then Bailly, at the head of the battalion of Grenadiers that was held constantly in reserve at the Hôtel de Ville, set forth for the Champ de Mars.

La Fayette had gone home to the rue de Bourbon, and when word was brought of this new outbreak, he mounted his horse and overtook the Mayor and the troops on the way. They arrived at eight o'clock, in the calm light of the July evening. As La Fayette rode out on the plain—

where just a year before, on his white horse, he had galloped about in an apotheosis—the crowd was silent. The cannons trundled by, and Mayor Bailly, in his scarf of office, displayed his red flag and began to read his proclamation of martial law; but the mob rained on him a hail of stones, and some one in the crowd fired a shot that wounded a dragoon. The Guards fired a volley in the air, but taking this forbearance for weakness, the mob shied another shower of stones. Then the military, goaded beyond endurance, fired into the mob. An artilleryman was just about to touch off his cannon, when La Fayette, not having had time to stop him, thrust his horse across the cannon's mouth, and the gunner, horrified, snatched away the match just in time. A dozen of the rioters were killed and as many wounded; several National Guards were injured; two Chasseurs were assassinated on the way back to the city and a gunner was stabbed to death.

But the riot was over. The mob slunk away; the Champ de Mars was empty, and the altar of the nation left with no patriot before it. When the news reached Paris that evening, the Jacobins, perorating at their club, at once dived out of windows, darted out of doors and scuttled away as fast as they could lay leg to the ground. Brissot, Camille Desmoulins and Fréron went to cover; Marat bolted into his cellar and stayed there; Robespierre, frightened out of his wits, hurriedly changed his lodgings; Danton never stopped until he had reached London; and Hébert, the "Père Duchesne," who had ventured out to the Champ de Mars just in time to hear a bullet sing past his head, never recovered from the shock.

But La Fayette's popularity was gone. He had come to the ultimate impossibility, the impasse of democracy, where the sovereign people refuse to enforce their authority against

themselves. Even before he returned home that night, the mob, or a remnant of it, poured into the rue de Bourbon and, gathering before his house, began howling for the head of Madame de La Fayette, to be carried to the General on a pike. But she was not afraid; her first thought, on hearing the mob clamouring before her own house, was one of relief that the brigands were no longer at the Champ de Mars, and that her husband was safe, for, during all those terrible hours in which he had been exposed, she had been in an agony of suspense. Now she took Anastasie and Virginia in her arms, kissed them and told them that their father was safe; then calmly gave orders for the defence of the house. The Guard in the courtyard drove off the mob in the street; another mob was escalading the wall of the garden behind, which gave on the Place du Palais Bourbon, but a troop of cavalry, crossing the Place at that moment, dispersed it.

The Assembly voted its approbation and thanks to La Fayette and to Bailly for their work that day, and ordered a prosecution of Fournier l'Américain. But as soon as Camille Desmoulins and Marat recovered from the panic and ventured out of their bolt-holes, the attacks began. The clubs of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers opened again, and the blackguard floods were loosed; they began to revile him for his "sanguinary brutality" and "massacre of the Champ de Mars." Pamphlets appeared, "The Crimes of La Fayette in France Only since the Revolution and since His Nomination to the Grade of General." Caricatures represented him hanging to a lamp-post. Camille Desmoulins called him "the liberator of the Two Worlds, flower of the ages of janissaries, phœnix of the alguazils-majors, Don Quixote of the Capets and the two chambers, constellation of the White Horse."

The allusion to the two chambers in this specimen of the "headlong, lightly sparkling" Camille's wit, was to La Fayette's steady advocacy of the bicameral principle. But the Assembly, obsessed by democratic fears and jealous of executive authority, voted for a single chamber to the ruin of the Constitution.

Nevertheless the display of force at the Champ de Mars, however disastrous in its effect on his popularity, did exert a salutary influence, and for the rest of that summer Paris enjoyed peace. La Fayette thus had more leisure to devote to his legislative duties, and he used his influence in favour of those principles that he called American. He opposed the proposition of André that the Constitution should not be amended until after a lapse of thirty years; it was not the way they did it in America. But the Assembly, weary of his everlasing America, cried out in impatience:

"Ah! l'Amérique!"

But at last the Constitution was finished, and on September 3 solemnly laid before the King. Louis XVI accepted it, appeared before the Assembly and said: "To extinguish all hatreds let us all consent to forget the past." La Fayette, always ready to forgive, moved at once a general amnesty, and the motion was carried unanimously. On the 18th there was another celebration at the Champ de Mars, and for the last time La Fayette rode at the head of the National Guard to the altar of the nation, where the new Constitution was solemnly proclaimed to the people. For days Paris was in a delirium of joy, thinking that the long night was over. On September 30, the King in person declared the session of the Assembly closed, and Target, the president, said:

"Sire, in accepting the Constitution you have ended the Revolution."

At that moment the crowd outside was unharnessing the horses of the carriage in which rode Robespierre and Pétion, and drawing them away in triumph, crowned with oak-leaves.

XVIII

For once he did not share the illusions that reflected their glowing warmth in the official discourses of those feverish days of rejoicing. The Constitution did not suit him; perhaps it did not wholly suit any one. One of its defects lay in a clause providing that no member of the Constituent Assembly should be eligible to membership in the new Legislative Assembly, a self-denying ordinance proposed by the incorruptible Robespierre. Its pernicious effects were apparent, even before the old Assembly adjourned *sine die,* in the elections for members of the new legislature, held in that month of September. The Constituent, originally the States General, had been representative of all classes, the nobles, the clergy and the third estate, and it had been composed of the best minds of France, but, now that these were no longer eligible, democracy could indulge its preference for mediocre men. However, it was a constitution, and La Fayette was ready to support it, though with that shrewdness which lay beneath an enthusiasm that sometimes seemed ingenuous and naïve, he suspected that the work was not done. But at any rate, he had performed his own task, and as Washington had laid down his sword and retired to Mt. Vernon, so he would lay down his sword and retire to Chavaniac.

On October 8 he presented his resignation, and bade farewell to the National Guard.

There was sorrow at his going. "You may be sure," said Bailly, "that we shall never forget the hero of the Two

Worlds." The National Guard presented him with a sword forged from the locks of the Bastille. The Commune ordered a medal struck in his honour, and voted to present to him a statue of Washington by Houdon.

He set out for Chavaniac with his wife and daughters, and the long journey of a hundred and twenty leagues was one continuous ovation. He was obliged to stop, alight from his carriage, receive addresses and civic crowns and walk bare-headed through the towns, acknowledging the applause of the people. Flowers filled their carriages, and the little girls were delighted with so much excitement. At last, on October 18, after a journey of ten days, they drove up the hill to Chavaniac. His aunt with her seventy-two years was happy to have Gilbert once more at home; she had been convinced that he would never return again, and she could hardly believe it even now that she saw him settled in the old manor-house.

The former *curé* of Chavaniac was lodged there and La Fayette had to set aside one of his houses in the village for other *curés* who had refused to take the new oath. He put up a motto: "Peace and liberty," and wrote to Madame de Simiane:

> As a lover of liberty and equality, I rejoice in this total change which has placed all citizens on the same level, and respects only legal authorities. I can not tell you with what delectation I bow before a village mayor. One must be a little enthusiastic to enjoy all that as I do. I do not ask that you rejoice in it with me, but at least rejoice in it for me. . . . I take as much pleasure and perhaps as much *amour propre* in an absolute repose as I have taken for fifteen years in that action which, always directed towards the same end and crowned by success, leaves me no rôle but that of a labourer. Adieu. P.S. Since you are superstitious, I will tell you that I arrived here on the day of the anniversary of the taking of the army of Cornwallis.

Here then, after fourteen years of war and revolution, he settled down to the peaceful life of a country gentleman. He planned extensive improvements in the old house and commissioned the architect Vaudoyer to execute them. The embellishments were to be on a handsome scale; there was to be a temple of liberty to be known as the "Washington gallery" and the painter Houel was to make nine historical pictures representing scenes in the Revolution. He brought over from England John Dyson to act as steward and cultivate his farms on the English system, and with a tranquil joy new in his experience he saw the horizon of his life shrink to the rim of those hills of Velay. The Duchess d'Ayen had been visiting Pauline, the Marquise de Montagu, at Plauzat, until Pauline went to join her husband among the *émigrés* who had fled to England, and now she came to Chavaniac with Louise, Viscountess de Noailles. George was brought down by M. Frestel, and the Duchess was happier in this reunion of the family than even Adrienne herself. For Madame de La Fayette seemed to have a presentiment that such peace and happiness were too good to last. She knew too well that beneath that placid exterior which her husband affected, the old fires were still smouldering, and she viewed with anxiety the visits of those old friends who sought to entice him back into the stormy life of political action. He had not been at Chavaniac long before a delegation of the National Guard of Paris came to present an address, and in the speech with which he received them the Marquise recognized an old and familiar note:

"After having shared your labours, you see me returned to the spot that saw my birth. I shall leave it only to defend our common liberty, if it is endangered, and I hope to be fixed here for a long time."

A few days later another delegation came, this time from Brioude, to inform the General that he had been elected a member of the administration of the Haute-Loire, and that it was the intention of that body to choose him as President. He was a little shaken in his resolution, but he resisted, and in his speech said that whilst no one could be more touched by this mark of confidence and esteem, he must beg "his fellow-citizens to excuse him for declining." The frail little Marquise breathed again.

Then the discouraged Bailly resigned as Mayor, and La Fayette's friends urged him to become a candidate for the place. He declined, but zealous friends, disregarding his wishes, placed his name in nomination. His opponent was Pétion, the candidate of the Jacobins, and Pétion had the support of all La Fayette's old enemies, Orléanists, anarchists and royalists. Marie Antoinette herself was taking a hand in local politics and supporting Pétion—of all men in the world. "Monsieur de La Fayette," she said, "only wishes to be made Mayor of Paris in order to become, soon after, Mayor of the Palace. Pétion is a Jacobin, but he is an idiot incapable of becoming the leader of a party; as Mayor he will be a nullity." The combination of Queen and rabble won; Pétion was elected overwhelmingly, and with his entrance into the Hôtel de Ville, the Constitutionalists went out of power and the Jacobins took control of the Revolution.

Madame de La Fayette was delighted. The days of peace and tranquillity prolonged themselves into December; she was looking forward to a winter snowed in snugly in the Auvergne hills. Her mother and Louise left for Paris. December closed in upon them. Then rumours of war penetrated their snowy fastness, and one day a courier arrived at Chavaniac on His Majesty's Service. He delivered

a letter to the General—and the Marquise turned pale; she knew that the moment she had dreaded had arrived. He bade her good-bye, and once more, not without a sense of relief, the stormy petrel was off again.

XIX

Ever since the flight to Varennes the nobles had been leaving France in droves; no such aristocratic hegira had ever been seen. They went to London, to Brussels and the towns along the Rhine, living in mean lodgings, filled with the splenetic discontent of the impecunious exile. But the capital of the emigration was at Coblentz, where Monsieur and the Count d'Artois were holding their shabby little court. Two thousand officers of the old French army had gathered round them and were threatening to march across the frontier into France, and on December 14 the King notified the Elector of Trèves that if, before January 15, all armed gatherings of French refugees had not ceased in his states, he would consider him as an enemy. Narbonne, Minister of War, had formed three armies and gazetted Rochambeau, Lückner and La Fayette as their commanders. The King opposed the nomination of La Fayette, but Narbonne observed:

"If Your Majesty does not name him to-day, the will of the nation will oblige you to do so to-morrow."

He arrived in Paris during the night of December 22. He went to the Tuileries to make his duties to the King, and then on the 24th he appeared in the Assembly, where in the midst of an ovation, Lemontey, the President, said that in case of war, "the regenerated French people would oppose to tyrants the Constitution of La Fayette."

The Assembly was on its feet crying the old bravos; in

the streets the crowds were shouting the old *vivats.* Once more he rode through the streets of Paris to the old delightful cry of *"Vive La Fayette!"* At the idea of war against foreign tyrants, a wave of patriotic emotion had swept over Paris, and for the moment no faction could resist it. On Christmas Day he left town for Metz, escorted to the barriers by detachments of the National Guard, and by a vast crowd of citizens.

He arrived in Metz, the old garrison town which he had left in 1776 as a subaltern "to join his colours"; and was received by the *"vieux père"* Rochambeau and by Lückner.

A great deal of water had gone under the bridge since those days at Newport when Rochambeau had treated him with such patronizing condescension. Lückner, a grizzled veteran of the Seven Years' War, was attached to the new Constitution, without in the least understanding it, and was very amusing with his German accent, his naïve pleasantries—and his despair over the lack of discipline among the troops. Rochambeau had not the slightest confidence in these troops if they were to be opposed to German soldiers, drilled in the school of the great Frederick, and one glance at them convinced La Fayette that the Constitution was about all that France had just then to oppose the tyrants.

The army was estimated at three hundred thousand men, but there were only eighty-two thousand effectives, and many of these were volunteer levies, poorly drilled and badly clothed. What was worse, Jacobin agents had been at work among them, instilling ideas of anarchy and disobedience. A third of the officers, with aristocratic sympathies, had already crossed the frontier and joined the *émigrés,* and, as La Fayette wrote to Washington, "the rest, very badly disaffected, will also leave—soon, I hope."

The two old Marshals expected to find the young General

of the Revolution much more indulgent than they could ever be, and they were surprised when they found him more severe than any martinet of the old régime, though his methods had another and a better inspiration. His experience in America had made him familiar with raw troops, and he set to work with all his old energy and enthusiasm. He was, first of all, more austere and rigorous with himself than with any one. He broke at once all those luxurious habits, the grand equipages and all that in which the officers of the old army had always indulged. He looked after the comfort of his soldiers, tasted their soup, inspected their rations, visited the hospitals, won their confidence, established an iron discipline and inspired them by the flamboyant proclamations always so potent with the soldiers of France.

His men adored him, and as they marched past at dress parade they cried *"Vive La Fayette!"* and sang *"Ça ira"* while the assembled Messins kept time with hands and feet to the wild strains of the revolutionary song.

However, the Elector of Trèves was authorized by the powers to announce his submission, and the assemblies of bellicose royalists on his territories were for the time being scattered. But it was only a truce; the powers of Europe were coalescing against the Revolution and only awaiting a favourable moment to attack it. Narbonne summoned the three commanders to Paris for a crown council, and it was agreed that La Fayette should invade the Low Countries at the head of forty thousand men, and that Rochambeau should hold his army in readiness to support him, whilst Lückner should manœuvre on the Rhine. It was Rochambeau who proposed that La Fayette should invade the Low Countries, "because," as the Marshal said naïvely, "it is a question there of revolution, and Your Majesty

knows that Monsieur de La Fayette understands revolutions better than any one."

The blunt old Marshal was wholly out of his element and ill at ease in the party strife that was echoed in the discussions of the council, but La Fayette, with his fatal taste for political intrigue, was easily drawn into it. Narbonnne was a constitutionalist and a friend of La Fayette, and so, with his infallible instinct for the wrong thing, Louis XVI opposed his plans. Narbonne did not hesitate to speak his mind and threatened to resign. La Fayette, realizing the advantage to a general in the field of having a friend at the War Office, induced Rochambeau and Lückner to join him in writing to Narbonne, representing the "pernicious effects" that would follow his resignation. Narbonne showed these letters about, and of course they got into print. The result was that which usually follows the incursions of soldiers into politics; the King was offended and the Jacobins were delighted, for it gave them one more welcome excuse for attacking La Fayette. Then Narbonne made another blunder; he touched the sensitive democratic nerve of the Assembly when he made an appeal to its "most distinguished members." An enormous majority of the new deputies, convinced, no doubt with reason, that they could not be embraced in this flattering characterization, were offended and joined the King. *Exit* Narbonne.

Thus the Girondins came into power, with Dumouriez at the Foreign Office, Graves at the War Office and Roland, the husband of Madame Roland, at the Interior.

During the weeks that this ministerial crisis lasted, La Fayette remained in Paris, and his prolonged sojourn and his political activity infuriated the politicians. In a stormy meeting of the Jacobins, Robespierre made a vicious attack on "the pretended hero of two worlds," and wound up by

saying, "Let the glaive of the law sweep horizontally to cut off all the heads of the great conspirators."

The sinister shadow of the "new machine for cutting off heads," the invention of which was persistently ascribed to the gentle Dr. Guillotine, was already stealing upon him. The Jacobins were gaining the upper hand, the centre of governmental gravity was shifting from the constitutional authorities to the Jacobin clubs. With Pétion at the Hôtel de Ville, they controlled the National Guard, all the local administrations in the provinces were in their hands and side by side with the constituted government there was raised up an irresponsible, arbitrary and extra-legal power, concentrated in the bloody hands of the fanatical Robespierre, the corrupt Danton and the maniacal Marat.

La Fayette returned to Metz, but the Jacobins insisted that he was still in Paris, and nightly from the tribune of the Jacobins, Robespierre screamed his imprecations; Marat, from his cellar, vilified "the Sieur Motié" and Hubert, Père Duchesne, put into the mouth of "Madame Veto" accusations against *"le fidèle Blondinet,"* of having secretly arranged with Bouillé the massacre of Nancy.

Robespierre demanded that his bust be removed from the Hôtel de Ville; another member that the name of the rue La Fayette be changed and such feeling was aroused against Brissot, who had lived off the table of La Fayette, that he felt obliged to deny the association that so long had nourished him.

From his camp at Metz La Fayette looked on at this storm of opposition, while La Rochefoucauld and other friends kept him informed. Then a courier arrived with dispatches announcing that war had been declared against Austria, and two days later a messenger came from Du-

mouriez with new orders that wholly changed the plan of campaign agreed upon at Paris.

He was not surprised by anything that Dumouriez might do. He knew Dumouriez, who had served with both sides in the quarrel between Genoa and Corsica in 1763, and had been on both sides of the barrier in the Revolution; he had as mistress a sister of the famous *émigré* Rivarol, and was accused of having appropriated six million francs of public funds. However, a reputation for venality could do no harm to a Jacobin politician, especially one who, in the tribune of the Jacobins, had theatrically put on the red cotton cap of galley-slaves that had become the symbol of liberty.

Dumouriez would not hesitate to injure him if he could, and the sudden change of plans made his position all the more difficult. Lauzun, now Duke de Biron, commanding under Rochambeau, was to take Mons and then Brussels. Furnes was to be taken by Delbeck, Tournay by Théobald Dillon, Porentruy by Lückner, while La Fayette was to move from Metz to Givet, take Namur and cut off communications with Luxembourg.

This movement, which, if successfully carried out, would have delivered maritime Flanders into the hands of the French, was chiefly devised to favour Biron's ambitions, and to injure La Fayette, for the distance from Metz to Givet was such that Dumouriez thought it impossible for La Fayette to reach there in time. Alexandre Berthier, his adjutant general, had seen Biron, and Biron had shown him a private and confidential letter from Dumouriez, in which the Minister said that, as it was physically impossible for La Fayette to reach Givet in time to co-ordinate his movements with those of Biron, the responsibility, if the expedition failed, would fall on La Fayette.

He received his orders at evening on April 24; they directed him to be at Givet by the 30th. His soldiers, many of them, were without boots (it was like old times in Virginia), he lacked mounts for his cavalry and Givet was fifty-six leagues away.

He worked all night dictating orders, spent the next day in scouring the country round for the many things he lacked, issued a flaming proclamation to his men, sent a courier to Paris to say that he would be at Givet on the 28th and set his army in motion. The roads were bad and a blanket of steaming heat lay on the land; the troops suffered intensely, but they went forward singing *"Ça ira"* and declaring that "men and horses were ready to cut themselves in pieces for their general." He pushed them on mercilessly and arrived at Givet on the 28th, two days before the time appointed. The next day his patrols were in touch with the enemy; on the 30th, his Chasseurs were halfway to Namur driving back the Austrian Hussars, and on May 1, he posted Gouvion with an advance guard of three thousand men at Bouvines.

And then, bad news; a courier brought him dispatches from Rochambeau; Théobald Dillon had met with defeat at Quiévrain, his troops had mutinied, mobbed and murdered him, cut up his body and burned the pieces, and Biron was in full retreat.

Rochambeau, disgusted with the politicians at Paris, and horrified by the fate of Dillon, resigned. La Fayette offered to unite his army with that of the old Marshal and to serve under his orders. But Rochambeau replied to the friends whom La Fayette sent to Valenciennes with this proposal: "How do you think I can resist Dumouriez and the Jacobins when La Fayette, who has so many titles to popularity, can hardly defend himself against them?"

He sent La Colombe and Alexandre Berthier to Paris to ask for reinforcements and a few days later received an impertinent letter from Roland, the Girondin Minister of the Interior, who, with the irascibility of a vain, weak man, complained that La Colombe had said that, as "the French soldiers were cowards, they could never have a numerical superiority too great in the army."

La Colombe wrote to Roland explaining that "the word 'coward,' which I pronounced in your presence, was the expression of my contempt for the men who fled instead of fighting." But La Fayette would not hear of any criticism of his old aide-de-camp and replied in the tone of that seigniorial contempt for a plebeian upstart like Roland, which two revolutions could not efface from his patrician manner. "I can not believe that my aide-de-camp has gone to see a man whose existence was unknown to him until the *Gazette* informed him that he was a minister, and who barely knows his name to-day, expressly to calumniate the French nation and the army of his general."

Roland sent La Fayette two more sarcastic letters which his ambitious wife, who had been snubbed by the nobility for years, probably had a hand in drawing up. "Can it really be the emulator of Washington," he asked, "who expresses himself as might a courtier of the old régime?"

He reconnoitred the country towards Mons, and his troops had skirmishes with the enemy. On June 11 the Austrians attacked at Glisuelle and were repulsed, but Gouvion was struck by a cannon ball and killed. It was a grief to him to lose the old friend who had served with him in America and under him in France, and in his report to the Minister of War he said: "He is mourned by his soldiers and by the whole army; he will be mourned by the National Guard of Paris and by all those who appreciate

the value of a pure civism, an unshakable loyalty, and the union of courage with talent. I will not speak of my personal affliction; my friends will pity me."

The reports from Paris grew more and more discouraging; the Jacobins were usurping all the power in France, and replacing the constitutional authorities; at official ceremonies the president of the club walked side by side with the President of the Assembly and took precedence of Ministers of State. Paris was sinking into anarchy; gangs of ruffians, so ragged that they could hardly be said to wear breeches at all, and so came to be known as the *sans culottes,* were spreading terror in the streets, and nothing was done to restrain this hooliganism. Madame Roland, proudly established in Calonne's *hôtel,* now taken over as a ministerial residence, was daily receiving the Girondin deputies in her *salon* and winning them to those measures by which she would avenge herself on the Queen, whom she hated with an intense ferocity. There in her *salon* were devised three decrees to be presented to the King in the belief that he would not sign them, and so give an excuse to rouse the mob against him. The first of these decrees provided that all non-juring priests should be deported; the second, that the King should be deprived of his bodyguard; the third, that an army of twenty thousand men—to be formed of representatives of the Jacobin clubs all over France—should be encamped near Paris. Louis XVI was willing to sanction the second decree, but he would not agree to the first and third.

Then Madame Roland wrote an insulting letter for her husband to send to him, and driven to desperation the King mustered sufficient resolution to dismiss Roland, Servan and Clavière, and Manon had to clear out of those stately *salons* in the *hôtel* of Calonne.

The fall of the three ministers was greeted at headquarters with a great explosion of laughter, and the action of the King so delighted La Fayette that he wrote to felicitate him and to urge him to stand fast in resistance, and he dictated a long and audacious letter to the Assembly, dated June 16, "in the IVth year of liberty." He rebuked them all in scathing words, with the invigilating manner of a tutor, he, a general in the field.

> Can you deny that a faction, and, in order to avoid vague denominations, that the Jacobite faction, has caused all these disorders? It is this faction that I openly accuse. Organized as an empire apart, in its metropole and in its applications, blindly directed by a few ambitious leaders, this sect forms a distinct corporation in the midst of the French people, whose powers it is usurping, by subjugating its representatives and its agents. It is there that, in its public sessions, attachment to the law is called "aristocracy" and its infraction "patriotism"; there, the assassins of Désilles are given triumphs and the crimes of Jourdan find panegyrists. . . . All of them wish to overturn our laws, rejoice in disorders, rise against the authority that the people have conferred, detest the National Guard, preach indiscipline to the army, spread now defiance and now discouragement. As for me, Messieurs, who espoused the cause of America at the moment when even her ambassadors declared to me that it was lost, who, since then, have devoted myself to a persevering defence of liberty and of the sovereignty of the peoples, I come to-day, full of confidence in the justice of our cause, of contempt for the cowards who desert it, and of indignation against the traitors who would disgrace it.

And so on, in a raging torrent, he poured forth his long-pent anger and indigation as he strode up and down in his headquarters, dictating this fiery address.

He sent La Colombe post-haste to Paris with it, and it was read in the Assembly on June 18. As soon as the

deputies could catch their breath there was one of those scenes of disorder that force the presidents of French assemblies to the extreme of putting on their hats. Vergniaud observed that a general should address the Assembly only through the Minister of War; Guadet doubted the authenticity of the letter, and said: "When Cromwell used such language, liberty was lost in England, and I can not persuade myself that the emulator of Washington wishes to imitate the conduct of this Protector."

That night the club of the Jacobins was in an uproar. "Strike La Fayette, and the nation is saved," shrieked Robespierre. Danton roared: "There is no doubt that La Fayette is the chief of that nobility which has formed a coalition with all the tyrants of Europe." And Camille Desmoulins stammered: "You know very well that for two years I have killed myself crying to the departments: 'Monsieur La Fayette is a great scoundrel!' "

Orders went out from Jacobin headquarters to the Jacobin clubs all over France denouncing him as the most dangerous enemy of France, but notwithstanding seventy-five departments and several cities sent him complimentary addresses expressing their approval.

He was in camp at Bavay when they brought him word of the riots of June 20; the mob had invaded the Tuileries, transformed the gilded and stately splendour of the Œil-de-bœuf into the reeking squalor of a tap-room, pillaged the cellars, set out bottles on the tables, seated themselves familiarly, while they guzzled wine, smoked their pipes and blew the smoke in the faces of the King, the Queen and Madame Elisabeth, at last forcing the helpless monarch himself to put on a red cap, clink glasses with them and drink to the health of the nation.

When La Fayette heard of that day's doings, he was

almost beside himself. He sent Bureaux de Pusy to Menin with a letter for Lückner, telling the old Marshal that unless he contemplated some military movement that demanded his presence, he was going to Paris.

"Ever since I have drawn breath," he wrote, "it has been for the cause of liberty. I will defend it to my last sigh against every sort of tyranny, and I can not submit in silence to that which the factions are exercising on the National Assembly and the King. . . . But everybody is afraid of them, and I, who do not know that weakness, I will tell them the truth."

The old Prussian Marshal told Pusy that there were no military reasons just then demanding the presence of La Fayette, but he would advise him not to go to Paris, "because they will cut off his head if he does."

But his mind was made up. He went back to Maubeuge, took the necessary measures to protect his army for the few days that he would be away and on the evening of June 26, with but an aide-de-camp and his valet, he set out for Paris in a post-chaise, the horses galloping furiously under the lash of the postilions.

XX

Early in the morning of Tuesday, June 28, his post-chaise lurched down the rue de Seine, stopped at No. 41, and he announced himself to his astonished friend, the Duke de La Rochefoucauld. He dashed off a note to the President of the Assembly, asking the Assembly to permit him to appear at the bar, and an hour later was striding once more down the gangway of the Manège. The galleries were packed, for the news of his sudden apparition had got abroad, and the crowds pressed in from the garden of the

Feuillants and the terraces of the Tuileries. He strode down the aisle, stood at the bar facing the high dais of the President and, in his penetrating voice, began to speak, in sharp staccato phrases. First of all he assured them that, after his arrangement with Marshal Lückner his presence could in no way compromise either the success of their arms, or the safety of his army. It had been said that his letter to the Assembly was not authentic, and he had been reproached with having written it in the midst of a camp. "It was my duty, perhaps, to come out of that honourable rampart which the affection of the troops formed around me, and to present myself alone in order to avow it.

"A stronger reason, Messieurs, forced me to come into your midst. The violence committed on the 20th at the Tuileries has excited the indignation and the alarm of all good citizens and particularly of the army." It was high time, he said, and it was as a citizen that he had the honour to address them, to guarantee the Constitution from attack, to assure the liberty of the Assembly and the independence and dignity of the King. He implored the Assembly to punish the instigators of the troubles of June 20 as criminals, and to destroy the Jacobin club which "invades the national sovereignty, tyrannizes over citizens and whose public debates leave no doubt of the atrocious sentiments of those who direct it."

The brief speech was over before his hearers could realize it. The tribunes breathed a sigh of something like disappointment. Madame de Staël, sitting in the diplomatic gallery, was not satisfied, but thought that it might have been due to an overfondness for eloquence. It had all happened so suddenly, so swiftly, like a dashing raid of cavalry; it took away every one's breath. There was a rattle

of rather uncertain applause. The President, of whom the etiquette expected some oracular comment, said:

"The National Assembly has sworn to uphold the Constitution. Faithful to its oath, it will be able to guarantee the Constitution against all attacks. It accords you the honours of the séance."

The honours of the séance meant that he might remain to hear himself abused, but without the least effort to hide the contempt that he felt for an Assembly that was terrorized by the Jacobins, he rather ostentatiously strode out of the hall. There were some cheers for him as he passed through the crowds gathered on the terraces, but not so many as there used to be; a sullen fear lay on the crowd, as it had lain on the Assembly. He went to the Tuileries and asked for an audience. When he was ushered into the presence of the King, he found the Queen and Madame Elisabeth with him. Poor Louis received him almost warmly, as though glad of a friend; the Queen, in whose blue eyes there was already something tragic, received him politely, but with the old hauteur. But Madame Elisabeth, good, kind, plain little Madame Elisabeth, was all warmth and gratitude to him for coming to their aid.

He left the palace and went over to the left bank to his own house in the rue de Bourbon, closed and in the care of servants, now that all the family were at Chavaniac. There he found a detachment of National Guards, old and loyal friends, come to protect him, not an unnecessary precaution considering the threats the Jacobins were already making. For they were furious and that night, at the session of the club in the rue Saint-Honoré, Robespierre said: "I come now to the order of the day, that is, to the enemy of the nation, La Fayette." And their hatred was poured out hot.

As the orators warmed to their work in that crowded little chapel, on that hot July night, they bid against one another to see which could call him the hardest names. Couthon said he was the "greatest of criminals" and La Source, who had a richer Jacobin vocabulary, added, "Yes, Messieurs, La Fayette is a traitor, an impostor; La Fayette is a scoundrel."

He went to Court the next day and his appearance made a sensation. It was a day of reception; the diplomatic corps was present, and after the *cercle* was over, he received felicitations and compliments. The King was well enough disposed, but the Queen—there was no relenting in her eyes! Madame Elisabeth welcomed him warmly, and he heard that she had told the Queen they should forget the past and throw themselves with confidence into the arms of the only man who could save the King and his family, but the Queen had answered haughtily:

"Better perish utterly than be saved by La Fayette!"

In the throng that shifted back and forth in the splendid Salle de Parade, he saw Gouverneur Morris, who had succeeded Jefferson as American Minister. The satisfaction that Morris felt in being in the presence of royalty, even royalty on a shaky throne, shone in his face. La Fayette liked Morris no better than he had ever done; the sentiments openly proclaimed by the American Minister had filled him with disgust; he had even ventured to complain of them to Washington. He remembered old Franklin, and how he, in his spectacles, with his crab-apple stick and his innocent manner, had wound them all round his little finger; he recalled Jefferson, with his rare culture and simplicity; but after all, Morris was good at heart and intelligent; moreover, he was an American, and everything American was meritorious in La Fayette's eyes. Besides,

he could never hold a grudge long; he would go up and speak to him.

He did so, greeting him as an old friend, and as though nothing had happened, and a moment later he wished he had not done so. For—of all things in the world!—Morris received him with something like condescension, treated him *de haut en bas*—him, a La Fayette! However, Morris, though his eye was always wandering towards the King or the Queen, took advantage of the moment to give him some advice.

"You must either return soon to your army, or go to Orléans," said Morris. "And you must be prepared to fight for a good Constitution, or for the wretched piece of paper which bears the name."

"What do you mean by a good Constitution? An aristocratic one?"

"Yes," Morris replied. "I presume that you have lived long enough in the present style to see that a popular government is good for nothing in France?"

He evaded this leading question and said that what he wished was the American Constitution, but with a hereditary executive.

"In that case," replied Morris, "the monarch will be too strong, and must be checked by an hereditary Senate."

"It would go hard with me to give up that point," he said.

The talk ended there; the King had singled him out and was moving towards him with that look which betokens a momentary beam of the royal attention. The King told him that he was to review the National Guard the next day, and La Fayette, who had been in town long enough to learn that two-thirds of the Legislative Assembly abhorred their slavery to the Jacobins, saw an opportunity to stiffen

resistance; he asked the King to let him ride with him to the review, and proposed that, after the King had retired, he should speak to the National Guard and try to restore the old feeling of loyalty and devotion. The King was delighted and it was so arranged.

But the next day, as he was preparing to go to the review word was brought him that it would not be held; no reason was given, but he asked some friends who knew what was going on at the Tuileries, and they told him that Marie Antoinette on hearing of the plan had sent word to Santerre and to Pétion that La Fayette was going to ride with the King and harangue the troops. The hint was enough; Pétion had countermanded the review.

Balked by the intrigues of the Queen herself, there was little more that he could do. He had conferences with La Rochefoucauld and some of the old Constitutionalists; he assembled at his house several influential officers of the National Guard, and urged them to stand fast against the anarchists. They listened with the touching fidelity that they had shown since his return; they had mounted guard at his house every night, and that morning a great company of them had come to plant in his garden a may-pole entwined with the colours of liberty. But he could not stay to inspire them; he must return to his army, there in the north, facing the troops of the Duke of Brunswick, and so sending a letter to the Assembly in which he once more roundly denounced the Jacobins, he left Paris that evening, escorted by his old Grenadiers to the barrier of Saint-Denis. He went away discouraged, sadly conscious that he had failed to rouse resistance to the Jacobin monster that was gathering France into its toils. But he would not give up yet. Arrived at his headquarters at Maubeuge, he sent Bureaux de Pusy with a letter to Lückner proposing

that they unite their armies and attack the Duke of Saxe-Teschen at Mons; a victory over a foreign enemy might change things at home. But the old Marshal refused; he had constantly before his eyes the horrible fate of poor Théobald Dillon. Then he asked Lückner to meet him at Valenciennes; he had another plan, which he dared not commit to writing.

He was convinced now that the only way to save the King from himself, from his enemies and from his friends, was to get him away from Paris. That, in itself, was not a new idea; many times, ever since the disastrous flight to Varennes, such plans had been laid—plans to take him to the Midi, to Rouen or to Havre, whence he could cross to England; Gouverneur Morris at that very moment was up to his eyes in such a plot. The more he thought of the idea, the better it pleased him; his discouragement vanished; he was caught up once more in the exhilaration of one of his bold and dashing improvisations, all the more attractive because of the risk and danger he himself would run. He, who had arrested the King on the flight to Varennes, would help him now to escape—not to run cravenly away, like some white-livered *émigré,* but to save himself by a kingly deed, if, in his weak nature, there could be found enough backbone for a kingly deed.

The Duke of Brunswick was menacing an attack between Montmédy and Longwy, and, in the manœuvres that Lückner and La Fayette were just then making to protect this weak part of their line, La Fayette's troops would march by La Capelle; La Capelle was not far from Compiègne; at Compiègne there was a royal *château;* under the Constitution, the King, whilst the Assembly was sitting, could not go more than twenty leagues from the capital; Compiègne was within that permitted radius. Suppose the

King were to decide to go into residence for a while that summer at Compiègne? He would go to Paris, and escort the King to the Assembly, where Louis XVI would announce his intention; the Assembly could make no objection to such a constitutional proceeding; with a handful of faithful troops he could easily overawe the Jacobins; at the sight of cold steel their leaders would scuttle away to cover; he could see the yellow face of Robespierre, as he grinned mirthlessly, bit his finger-nails and shuddered with fear. . . . With a detachment of his old dependables in the National Guard of Paris, he would escort the King to Compiègne. He had two regiments of Chasseurs of which he was perfectly sure. He would place La Tour-Maubourg in command; thus protected, the King could issue a proclamation forbidding his brothers and the *émigrés* across the frontier to advance any further; declare himself once more in favour of the Constitution and ready to march at the head of his troops. Already, in his buoyant enthusiasm, he was dramatizing himself, riding with Louis XVI in triumph back into Paris. He broached the subject to Lückner at Valenciennes, and the old Marshal saw no objection to the plan, in fact, thought rather well of it. Then he sent La Colombe secretly to Paris to lay the plan before some of his friends.

For days he fretted impatiently, watching the road anxiously for the cloud of dust that would announce La Colombe's return. La Colombe came, and when La Fayette saw him, he knew at once by his expression that he had failed.

On arriving at Paris, La Colombe had seen Lally-Tollendal, and through him and some of the royalists the plan was laid before the King. The King's secretary and confidant, Bertrand de Molleville, advised Louis XVI to

adopt it. But, of course, they encountered the inevitable opposition of those stupid advisers by whom the King was surrounded; they were placing all their confidence just then in the victory of the allied Prussian and Austrian armies under the Duke of Brunswick, and those regiments of *émigrés* under Monsieur and the Count d'Artois, hovering in the lush fields of Belgium just across the northern frontier. They said openly in the Tuileries:

"We know very well that Monsieur de La Fayette would save the King, but he would not preserve the monarchy."

And then there was the Queen; she could not get out of her head a saying of Mirabeau's, uttered shortly before his death: "In case of war, La Fayette would like to keep the King a prisoner in his tent."

Bertrand de Molleville pressed her to accept the offer of La Fayette, but, recalling the 5th and 6th of October at Versailles, she shook her head and said:

"No! It would be too much to be in debt to him twice for our lives."

And so La Colombe was told to thank his General for his offer and to inform him that it could not be accepted. He had an audience of the Queen just before leaving, and had asked Her Majesty to tell him by what strange blindness she and the King had reached such a fatal decision. She had replied:

"We are very grateful to your general, but it would be better for us to be shut up for two months in a tower."

La Colombe had no idea what the Queen could have meant by this oracular utterance; no more had La Fayette, though they knew that, influenced by the "Austrian committee" with its absurd intrigues and preposterous illusions, she was placing dependence on Danton, who had been in her pay for a long time.

Thus the plan failed, and with it the last chance of saving Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Years afterwards, in his *Mémoires,* Bertrand de Molleville wrote: "If the King and his family had not had such a repugnance to owing their life to the general who defended liberty at the same time, he could have saved them."

XXI

He was looking forward, however, to July 14, when once more, before the altar on the Champ de Mars, they would celebrate the Fête of the Federation. The two generals commanding the army would be there, and he would make one more effort to save the cause of constitutional government. But new orders came; only the ranking general was to attend the celebration. And so Lückner went alone, and at Paris he was invited by Monseigneur Gobet, the constitutional Bishop of Paris, to sup at the episcopal palace. A number of Jacobin deputies were there; the supper was long, the Bishop's wines were good and as the old hussar at seventy could not carry his liquor quite so well as he once had done, it was not hard for the Bishop and his Jacobin guests to get him to talk. The next day, six of the Jacobin deputies signed and presented to the Assembly a statement attesting that at the supper Lückner had declared that Bureaux de Pusy had come to his camp with a proposal from La Fayette to unite their armies and march on Paris.

A rumour of this latest conspiracy, travelling with the speed of bad news, came to him in his camp at Longwy, and he wrote at once to Lückner. The courier met Lückner at Chalons, on his way to Strasbourg, riding hard to get away from the miserable politicians who had entangled him

in their plots at Paris. His head was still aching from the episcopal supper of two nights before, but he sat down at three o'clock in the morning and wrote that all he could say was "that the cabal must treat us equally and that I am informed that you and I have already been denounced, one against the other. . . . Paris is frightful in my eyes!"

He received official confirmation of the attack on him in a letter from Dumouriez, then Minister of the Interior, who wrote in pursuance of a decree of the Assembly, demanding an explanation. He sent a curt reply: "Did I propose to Monsieur le Maréchal Lückner to march with our armies on Paris? To that I reply in four short words: That is not true."

He wrote again to Lückner, sending him Dumouriez's letter and a few days later received a reply from the Marshal declaring his loyal attachment, and assuring him that the statements attributed to him were "as false as they are impossible."

The Assembly had ordered Bureaux de Pusy to present himself at the bar; on the 29th he appeared, and in a spirited address, with the entire correspondence between La Fayette and Lückner in hand, entirely exculpated his chief, and laid bare the plot of the Jacobins before the eyes of their howling partisans in the tribunes. The Assembly adjourned the debate for a week.

But the Jacobins had just received an unexpected boon from the King's own allies and brothers; on July 25 the Duke of Brunswick, commanding the allied Prussian and Austrian armies assembled on the frontier, issued from Coblentz his pompous proclamation to the French people; if the Tuileries were again invaded or the least assault made on the royal family Their Imperial and Royal Majesties would take "an exemplary and never to be forgotten ven-

geance by giving up the town of Paris to military execution and to total subversion and the guilty rebels to the death they have deserved; and all inhabitants who fired on the troops would be punished with all the rigour of the laws of war."

This threat had, of course, the effect that any other than the German military mind would have foreseen; it united the French nation and consolidated the power of the Jacobins. A thrill of patriotism ran through France, and men crowded the enrolling booths to enlist against the foreign invader. They made Dumouriez a general and sent him to the front. When La Fayette heard of this he wrote to the Minister of War: "A piece of news that I do not believe and that I think must be a mere pleasantry, is that of the decision you are said to have taken to send Dumouriez to the army that I command. I have accused him openly of madness or of treason to the public good and to me."

He instructed Arthur Dillon, commanding on his left wing, that if Dumouriez came he was to give him orders to leave. But Dumouriez came. The old days when the name of La Fayette was magical at Paris, when his letters to ministers were orders, were gone; and Gouverneur Morris was just then writing to Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State, "I verily believe that if M. de La Fayette were to appear just now in Paris unattended by his army he would be torn to pieces."

On July 30 the Marseillais had marched into Paris, bawling the new song that Rouget de Lisle had composed three months before and dedicated to Dietrich, the patriotic Mayor of Strasbourg. *"Allons enfants de la patrie!"* he had sung, not to rouse the rabble to murder and riot, but to summon patriotic citizens to the defence of their country, menaced

with invasion by foreign foes. Little had he dreamed that his stirring song would be named after those hired assassins who came to spread terror in the capital. They marched to the faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau, fraternizing in taverns with men like themselves, paraded the Champs Elysées, followed by the riff-raff of the *faubourgs,* danced the *farandole,* held an orgy and began business by stoning some Grenadiers of the Filles Saint-Thomas, a loyal regiment, who were dining in a restaurant.

La Colombe was in Paris with Matthieu Dumas, looking after La Fayette's interests and keeping him informed of the events that were now swiftly moving towards the catastrophe. On August 8, Jean de Bry reported for the Committee of Twelve a decree accusing La Fayette of treason, and Brissot warmly supported the motion to arraign him. The galleries were packed for the occasion with Jacobin mobs, shouting for La Fayette's head, and howling down those who spoke in his favour—Vaublanc, Dumolard, Limousin and others of the moderates and constitutionalists. In spite of Girondins and Jacobins and the mob in the galleries, the Assembly voted to print the noble speech of Vaublanc, and by a vote of four hundred and six to two hundred and twenty-four the Assembly refused to accuse him.

The Jacobins were wild with fury; at the close of the session, Dumolard, Vaublanc, Daverhout, Quatremère and Froudière had to take refuge in the guard-house at the Palais Royal. Matthieu Dumas, ill-used by every mob, was leaving the Manège by the passage that led to the convent of the Capucins, when he was surrounded by a band of *tricoteuses*—the harridans who brought their knitting to occupy their hands whilst their eyes feasted on scenes of violence; they trampled him under foot, and he would have

perished if the ushers of the Assembly had not rescued him from the ferocious hags.

Then came the tragic and fatidical August 10. La Fayette was in camp at Sedan when he received the news. A soldier of the National Guard of Paris arrived at his headquarters, followed by an officer of the army who, pistol in hand, had forced his way through the barricade at Saint-Denis and got out of the city. The accounts they brought were the first vague and confused reports of men who had fled from the horror of a vast catastrophe, but they could tell him that once more the mob had invaded the Tuileries and this time massacred the Swiss Guard.

In his anxiety he wrote at once to Abancourt who was, or at last accounts had been, Minister of War, saying that he had heard of "great movements" in Paris, and was anxiously awaiting exact news. He suspected that the riots in Paris were part of a counter-revolution, for they coincided strangely with the movements of the Duke of Brunswick. The enemy on his front had been active the day before; reinforcements of eight thousand men, coming from the Low Countries by way of Luxembourg, had camped at Saint-Hubert. His own requests for reinforcements had not been answered, and then suddenly there was an ominous suppression of all communications with Paris. But news began to filter through; the King was "suspended" and imprisoned with the royal family in the tower of the Temple—just as the Queen had said to La Colombe! Danton was Minister of Justice; Abancourt had been replaced as Minister of War by Servan; meanwhile commissioners were on the way to inform him of events.

But he needed now no commissioners to inform him of events; he soon knew the story of that frightful day, that mob of Paris, pouring up out of the faubourgs of Saint-

Antoine and Saint-Marceau, with the Marseillais at their head, under those old familiar leaders, Santerre and Fournier l'Américain, sweeping through the streets, rushing to the Tuileries, raging through its gilded apartments; heads borne on pikes, the Swiss Guards, once more obeying the orders of Louis XVI not to fire, dying at their post, and the terrible women of the *faubourgs* plunging butcher's knives into their bowels. Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Brissot, all the great revolutionary leaders, had hidden in their bolt-holes until the massacre was over, and then emerged, Danton bearing a great sabre—and the Queen's money in his pocket!—and marched triumphantly at the head of a drunken mob of Marseillais. The King was a prisoner, the Assembly scattered, the Constitution knocked into a cocked hat, the law annulled, liberty dead and France prostrate under the despotism of the mob.

And this, then, was what all those years of toil and strain, of sacrifice and danger, had brought him to, him and his France! He thought of America and his old friends there, Washington, and Hamilton and Jefferson; what would they say? It was the blackest hour of his life, the end of his dream—the end of his youth.

XXII

But even in that dark hour he did not despair; he would give one more example of resistance to this tyranny of anarchy, as he had given the example of resistance to the far milder tyranny of monarchy. They were expecting the arrival of the commissioners, and as he had gained an ascendency over the northern part of France and practically ruled the Department of the Ardennes, the Mayor of Sedan readily adopted his suggestions in arranging their reception.

The commissioners arrived, Antonelli, Kersaint and Peraldi, and were promptly arrested and locked up in the *château.*

He thought that if he raised a standard, the people would rally to the King and the Constitution; under the protection of his troops a majority of the Assembly could meet at Chalons or in Flanders, form a parliament and govern in the name of the Constitution. But when he paraded his troops on the plain of Sedan and once more asked them to take the oath to support the Constitution, two entire battalions refused to swear. He ordered them into arrest, but the others were disaffected, too; he could rely on them no more. The Jacobin agents who had come from Paris as recruits had formed groups in each regiment to disaffect the troops and corrupt them with money. He saw his proud army slipping out of hand.

La Colombe, who had remained at Paris until the last moment, returned, bearing overtures from the Jacobins. They offered him the post of President in the republic they were proposing to set up, provided he would abandon the King and the Constitution, but he contemptuously refused. The imprisoned commissioners sent for La Colombe, assured him that his General had only to say the word to be "the first man in France," and begged him to accord them an interview which they said would arrange everything.

He sent a letter by one of his aides-de-camp, young Alexandre Romeuf, a brother of Louis, to Lückner, informing him of the arrest of the commissioners. Alexandre Romeuf galloped to Metz and back again in two days, with an account of his mission that provided a touch of the ridiculous always to be found in any situation, however serious. The old Marshal, on receiving La Fayette's letter, had paraded his troops and made them a speech; Alexandre Romeuf had taken it down verbatim, and written it out

phonetically, preserving the German accent with which Lückner spoke French.

> Officiers, non-gommissioned officiers; men: A great accident has chust happened at Paris. De enemy vich is pefore us, I don't mint him. But, de enemy vich is behint, I mint him. If dey gif you money, take it, eat, trink, I don't gare. Do not abandon me. Myself, I vill never abandon you. Officiers, non-gommissioned officiers, men; Cheneral La Fayette, he has arrested drie gommissioners, who had gone to stir up tisorders in his army. Ve vill haf soon de same visit, und ve vill receive dem de same. Here is de aide-de-gamp of La Fayette who has brought me de news; and who vill tell La Fayette de goot dispositions of de army of old Lückner.

Even in the midst of misfortune La Fayette's "family" could laugh, and they had a moment's gaiety over this speech of Lückner. But the Mayor of Metz was a Jacobin, and when he summoned Lückner to the Hôtel de Ville, the bedevilled old Marshal, bursting into tears, stammered something that was accepted as an act of submission to the new government, and then wrote to La Fayette urging him to guard the three commissioners carefully, for "he should not know what to do with them if they succeeded in getting as far as his camp."

The others held out no better; Montesquiou in the South knuckled under to the commissioners that were sent to him; Arthur Dillon, commanding in Flanders, though always a royalist, gave in at once. Dietrich, Mayor of Strasbourg, and Victor de Broglie resisted at first, but the Duke de Biron was commanding on the Rhine and, strong Orléanist that he was, forced them to surrender.

He was alone now; even his troops were growing hostile. On the 17th the Executive Council, the committee that had set itself up as the government, in the people's name, of

course, ordered him to turn his command over to Dumouriez and to appear before them at Paris immediately. He had no illusions about the fate that awaited him there; friends had sent him warning; he was to be formally accused, and accusation meant the guillotine. He was at Mairy, a village near Mouzon, on the Meuze; it was Saturday, August 18. What was he to do? Should he dispute the command of the army with Dumouriez? Divide the troops, compromise French soldiers in his own personal cause? For a moment he had a wild idea of flying to Paris, and once more daring the mob of accusers to their faces. But what good would that do? If only he could be killed in action against the enemy! But the Austrians and Prussians there beyond that sombre forest of Arden, were quiet in those summer days; he could not begin an attack and sacrifice the lives of his soldiers merely to court a glorious suicide. He talked it over with La Tour-Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy; there was only one hope left now, and that was to seek an asylum in a neutral country in order to save from the executioner his proscribed head, in the hope that one day he could again serve France and liberty.

This decision made, his first thought was for the security of the army and the frontier. He made all the dispositions, dictated orders for his general officers, outlining the precautions to be taken against the enemy.

He had to keep his plans secret, because all his officers would have begged to go with him. He would take his life-long friend, Cæsar de La Tour-Maubourg and Maubourg's brothers Victor and Charles; Bureaux de Pusy, his aides-de-camp and the officers who had served on his staff in the National Guard of Paris, and some friends who, because of their association with him, were sure to be be-

headed if they fell into the hands of the Jacobins. He would take his chief of staff and the colonel whom he had detailed to guard the commissioners in the prison of Sedan; his faithful La Colombe, of course, and Louis Romeuf with his brothers Victor and Alexandre, Victor Gouvion, brother of his old friend in the American war and Laumoy, fifteen of them in all. Then Bureaux de Pusy, in Sedan, by chance met Alexandre Lameth, La Fayette's old enemy, now fleeing from *gendarmes* who had an order for his arrest and on his way to seek safety under La Fayette's wing. Bureaux de Pusy had not the heart to let Lameth lose precious time just then and told him where he would find the General. La Fayette was not greatly pleased to see him, but he consented to Lameth's accompanying him, and Lameth, with his servant and M. d'Arblay, joined the party that was already too large for safety.

On Sunday morning, August 19, he rode with his staff and his usual escort of hussars, to the little town of Bouillon in the Ardennes, where Godefroid de Bouillon's mediæval castle frowned from its height above the river Semoy, at the frontier of France. At Bouillon he wrote a sorrowful letter of adieu to the authorities of Sedan, and sent it back by his orderlies with the orders he had prepared for the army. He sent back his escort of hussars, and every man who could still be of use to the nation. He took with him his two servants, Felix, a clever lad of sixteen, and a valet whom he called Chavaniac because he came from his seat in Auvergne. Some of the other officers also brought their servants and their orderlies, so that the cavalcade was composed of La Fayette and sixteen officers, and about twenty-four servants and orderlies. They set out towards evening in the rain, with heavy hearts, crossed the frontier and rode into the territory of the Principality of Liège, almost at the

very moment when the truncated Assembly at Paris was voting a decree accusing "Motier-La Fayette, heretofore general of the Army of the North, of rebellion against the law, of conspiracy against liberty and of treason against the nation," and commanding all soldiers and citizens to arrest him.

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